POSITION OF WOMEN IN TAMILNADU AS GLEANED THROUGH THE INSCRIPTIONS

Thesis submitted to Mother Teresa Women's University
for the award of degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
History

submitted by

R.Vimala

under the guidance and supervision of

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis titled "**Position of Women in Tamilnadu as Gleaned Through The Inscriptions - 600 A.D to 1800 A.D**" is a record of bonafide work submitted by R.Vimala during the period of her study based on original research and the thesis has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship or other similar title.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis titled "**Position of Women in Tamilnadu as Gleaned Through The Inscriptions - 600 A.D to 1800 A.D**" submitted by me for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History, is the record of research work done by me and the thesis has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship or other similar title. This is purely an independent work on my part.

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NOTE ON DIACRITICAL MARKS

Long vowels are indicated thus :

Ch	represents	ச
Chch	"	ச்ச்
ḍ	"	ड
d	"	த
t	"	ட
n	"	ண்
n	"	ஞ்
n	"	ங்
r	"	ர
r	"	ற
rra	"	ற்ற
ś	"	
s	"	ஷ (In respect of common words like Vishnu, sh. is employed).
ks	"	க்ஷ

No distinction, however, is made between ந and ன. Common names like Nagercoil and Madras are shown without diacritical marks.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.R.E.	Annual Reports on Epigraph
A.S.S.I.	Archaeological Survey of Southern India
E.I.	Epigraphia Indica
I.A.	Indian Antiquary
I.J.O.R.	Indian Jounral of Oriental Research
J.R.A.S.	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London
M.E.R.	Madras Epigraphical Report
S.I.I.	South Indian Inscriptions
T.A.R.	Travancore Archaeological Reports
T.A.S.	Travancore Archaeological Series

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INTRODUCTION

Chapter - I

INTRODUCTION

Tamil country is an abode of ancient civilisation which throws light on the spirit of History and Literature. Every country in the world represents its own history, tradition, culture, civilisation and Religion. An individual is moulded by this tradition. The values are the products of Literature and Religion of this tradition. They had impact on women and moulded them.

It is a fact that changes and shift in approaches, methods and contents of survey on women's study have marked a remarkable progress in the trends and views in respect of defining the position and status of women in socio - economic, political and religious configurations. It is known fact that the position of woman is not the same throughout the ages. "The Historical background under which the women were compelled to be under control is adequately explained by the historians, especially during the ancient and medieval period. It was a historical, social and cultural necessity". The prominent fields like Political, Administration, Security, Social and Economic were held by men as they were all related to power. The society continued to be patriarchal from the earliest onwards.

Apart from this, the ancient and medieval period remained as a war society which trusted more responsibilities on men. Further values are instructed to women, not for men so strictly. The values like chastity and morality were not compelled to men. Thus women were ruled by code of conducts in Tamil society as well as in Indian society rather than in any other society in the world. According to most authorities, the women were always not given equality at law. However, women remained in their fields and demonstrated their capability in their opportunities.

During Chōḷa period women began enjoy to more freedom and property rights from Chola Period. Early Tamil Literature makes many references to the free association of young men and women. The inscriptions of medieval period reveal that they played major role in religious and charity activities. Although they did not have direct participation in politics, their contribution in this regard is commendable. Besides these facts, the ancient Tamilians' attitude to women is ambivalent. She was at once a goddess and subordinate; Saint and Devadasi.

Śati was in vogue even from the Śangam period, but not widely spread. The medieval period accounted few more customs like Devadasi and Sati. The custom of devadasi or devaradiyar as an institution came into existence from 5th, and 6th century A.D. This custom of dedicating the girls and women to the service of temples include not only singing and dancing girls but also menial servants. This custom got degraded in later period.

The feminist writers of recent years began to present their views on women focusing on their position and status. Therefore the women's study has become more meaningful in respect of their rights, status and contributions to the progress of civilization and culture. Ignoring their mighty position and valuable contribution to family and social system the writing on women is not possible. This compulsion became reality as the writers began to present the views on women with the new waves of thoughts of their life. Therefore the research on women should include the needs of women.

Women's study has been assuming increasing significance in recent times. Until recently historians have taken into account changes in large scale while ignoring changes in the realms in which women are predominant, since men are contemporary record keepers and historical interpreters of those records. The historians have focused on those aspects of society which have given importance to men. The

questions, the historians have asked, have been directed only at activities led by and of social interest to men that is politics, war, economic organization and public institution as if women had no role to play on it. In fact, women have been involved in those activities too, but our present history has been rendered their invisibility by theoretical. Indeed, only on occasion women were allowed into the pages of history. Jansi Rani Laxmibai, Joan of Arc and a few others were mentioned as they were exceptional women performing male roles.

Many researches have done on the history of Tamilnadu and also researchers have undertaken to study the position of women of different time using various sources. C.Meenakshi in her work, "Administration and Social life under the Pallavas" has given details only about a few Queens but not about the common women. Yet she has devoted a few pages only to women's dresses and ornaments. The Cholas by K.A. Nilakanta Sastri deals elaborately on the Political, Social, Economic and Art traditions of the Cholas. In this work the personal names of the Officers, Political Geography, Chola's revenue system, numerous revenue forms, methods of tax assessment and Tax rates and the Chola bureaucracy were all elaborated in this study. Various economic activities like trade and commerce markets and so on were also studied. Aspects like irrigation techniques, urbanization and formation of cities, trade guides, were also addressed. However position of women was not discussed elaborately.

For writing history, there are various sources like literary work, foreign accounts, numismatics and folklore to write the history. Amongst them, K.A.Nilakanta Satri says, "The inscriptions are the most copious and authentic source of Indian history".

Inscriptions are the epigraphic records emerged in India even from the period of Indus culture (2500 B.C. to 1750 B.C.). They are also available in the form of seals made up of steatite stone and they are undeciphered seal scripts. Subsequently

Asoka Maurya, who spoke to the people directly through his major and minor rock edicts, pillar edicts and cave edicts, exposed the form of writing inscriptions. They reveal that the king Asoka commanded his people to carry out various welfare and **dharma** activities. They also reveal different types of administrative officials.

In Tamilnadu, early inscriptions are found in Tamil-Brāhmī scripts. They began to increase during 6th century A.D and accumulated in Pallava, Pandya and Chōla to Vijayanagara periods. In addition to these inscriptions, copper plates and Epigraphs are available in few hundred and coins are closely allied to stone and copper-plate inscriptions. The efforts that had been undertaken by the Archaeological department acquired historical importance.

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) undertook the job of discovery, survey and systematic collection of inscriptions. The pioneering work in this regard started in British period in 1886 for which an office and museum was established at Mysore. Dr.E.Hultz served as Director and Epigraphist to the Government of India. The successive pioneers of this study are H.Krishnamoorthy and K.V.Subramanya Ayyar Among them K.V.Subramanya Ayyar has been recognised as the father of Tamil inscriptions. The estampages of nearly 40,000 inscriptions copied by Archaeological survey of India are stored in the Directorate of Epigraphy at Mysore. The Tamilnadu State Department of Archaeology contributed much to promote epigraphical studies in Tamilnadu. Iraravatham Mahadevan has done extensive research on early Tamil epigraphy which covers the earliest time to 6th century A.D. Pudukottai state in the Madras Presidency created an establishment to study, survey and collect its monuments and inscriptions in 1910 A.D. They are nearly 1500 inscriptions. Among them 270 inscriptions in English translation with details of their situation, time and dynasty were published by Commissioner of museums, Government of Tamilnadu in

two volumes under the authority of Pudukottai Darbar. These inscriptions belong to Pallava, Pāndya, Chōla Kings and Mutharaiar chieftains in and around Pudukottai region.

These collections provide detailed account of the discovery and decipherment of the inscriptions and relate their language and contents to the Tamil Literature and society. They were found in Tamil-Brahmi, Krantha, Vatteluthu and Tamil letters. In Sanskrit Writings, Krantha letters are used. In Tamil writings, Vatteluthu and Tamil letters are used.

The State Department of Archaeology and Epigraphy published them as Annual Reports of Epigraphy. The Epigraphia India, the South Indian Inscriptions, the Epigrapica Carnatica, Archaeological Reports on Epigraphy, the Pudukottai state inscriptions are the published work in this regard.

1.1 NEED FOR THE STUDY

Until the recent past, history has been the story of those who wield power being primary an account of the struggles of men just to capture power and then to retain it.

Women like other subordinate groups in society are among muted or even silent voices of history. They have been excluded both as actors and as authors from featuring as they remain in history and remain one of its most neglected subjects. Hence, a need arise here to rewrite the past in order to throw light on historically invisible women.

Today women are facing many problems like dowry, sati, child marriage, prostitution and patriarchal domination, which had its root in the ancient period. In order to find out root causes for such problems as well as to know the real **Position of women in that period, the topic on the Position of Women of Tamilnadu as gleaned through the inscriptions (600A.D.-1800 A.D.)** was taken.

1.2 AIM OF THE STUDY

There are some unlimited factors which determine women's position in different cultures and can provide a comparative data. Women's position is determined by cultural values, economic system, social and political legal structures or ideological superstructures (religion) customs and tradition.

It is a known fact that during the ancient and medieval periods the status and position of women were certainly inferior one to men. It was mainly because the Tamil society was a tradition oriented and customary society. They adhered to the practice of willing and unquestioned submission to husbands and elders without showing any opposition either to their commands or directives. They never thought of their status and worried about their rights and privileges. "The institution of patriarchy, patrilineal succession to property, man dominating family and so on are known to societies all over the world". She was biologically handicapped to the bread winners, the males. Though they had no rights to inherit property they played their role in the settlement of the property. They had no claims to the women because it was the prerogative of the ruler to decide it. They were not entrusted with any opportunity to avail any public office. She had no privilege to shift either her caste or Gotra. Up to the marriage she was a member of the caste and gotra of her father and after that she had to assume those of her husband. Throughout her life time she was expected to be under the control of men.

Dharma, morality, generosity, kind heartedness, charitable minds were the primary traits of every feminine member. In marriage too she was given only a secondary stage. She cannot select her partner because the parents arranged the marriages. She had to suffer the atrocities of Stridhanam and dowry. When Karpu or chastity was considered as a compulsory trait of women it was a compromise to maintain peace in the society without any justice. It was an unpleasant act for a

woman to survive after her husband because widowhood was a horrible torture which a lady had to face and feel. The widow was not allowed to enjoy the normal joy and happiness in life as done by others. She had no scope of divorce also. Though sati was in vogue it was not a wide spread custom in the Tamil society. It was mostly associated with the members of the royal families and the references about sati by common women are negligible in nature.

Women have done equally with men to history and determine their lives and activities. However it has been found out that they were not always same in all time and all places. Methodological innovations are put forward by asking new questions from the perspectives of women by using all kinds of traditional sources and looking into all structures and systems in which women were confined.

The major purpose of this research is to know how do women visualize their role and determine the status within various systems and sub-systems in family, community and the wider society and perceive the origin and instruments of their oppression. How do women form their identity, self – image and value system? What women spend most of their time doing must obviously be the subject of feminist research. Without knowing how and why women's oppression occurs, we cannot find out how to avoid its occurrence, and how the liberation could be achieved. As no effort had been hitherto be made, an attempt is done here to do research on that uncovered area.

Thus, the study aims to know about the status of women of Tamilnadu from 6th A.D. to 18th A.D. centuries and present the thesis on the positions and functions of women in political, religious and socio-economic spheres of the medieval period of Tamilnadu history.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research would be a subject of feminist research. It will help the scholars to understand the present position of women and assist the scholars to formulate the theoretical conceptions regarding women's subordination, oppression and suppression. The government policy makers, non-governmental organizations, and the people who are willing to help women folk will be given insights into the problem of women and will take steps to eradicate the women's problem in order to empower them.

1.4 OBJECTIVES

Women's history does not merely add to the fund of knowledge we have known about women in past societies, but it seeks information to formulate traditional concepts and categories and thus the aims of the study are focused on the following objectives:

1. To trace out the position and status of women in the historical context of Tamilnadu.
2. To study the role and functions of women in medieval period of Tamilnadu History.
3. To collect the data from the inscriptions that survived during the research period.
4. To construct the position of women in socio-economic, political and religious conditions as gleaned through inscriptions.
5. To find out the causes for the oppressive attitude towards women and suggest ways for their upliftment and emancipation.
6. To highlight the point that women began to acquire more importance in Political, social and religious fields during the Chola period which sanctioned more freedom and rights in exercising their power and holding properties

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Historical research interprets past trends of attitude, event and fact. In writing this thesis, interpretative and analytical historical method is adopted. The inscriptions of the research period are used as primary sources .In order to correlate the data, literature and other sources like legends and myths are consulted as secondary sources, and the sources employed are given as genuine footnotes. Further the books which are related to the study of inscriptions and history of the relevant period are referred to get clarity over the facts. At the end, the sources are appended in the Bibliography.

1.6 SOURCES OF THE STUDY

The inscriptions of the Tamil country of different periods, though they are permanent historical records, it is worth to note that there are varieties of inscriptions. Early inscriptions show only facts. In course of time they acquired definite form. In this regard, the significant feature of inscriptions is 'Meikirthi'. They consist with details of the praiseworthy nature of the rulers along with their comforts. Generally they open with an invocation in prose or verse form. Then follows a preamble in which the names and achievements of the ruler and his ancestors are narrated. After this, donor and description of donated objects are presented. They end with an imprecation on anyone. Even the Goddess like Bhumadevi, Malaimahal and others are invoked in the beginning. These inscriptions could be classified as historical, literary, religious and donative. The inscriptions serve as primary sources, providing historical facts and other evidences, in understanding the position and status of women in socio-economic, political and religious spheres during the medieval period of Tamilnadu history.

During the Bakthi cult movement in Tamilnadu, temples became the repository of inscriptions. They remained not only as worship places but also as places for

social activities. They served as record offices of the King's orders, edicts, treaties and land transactions, and so on. The judicial decisions undertaken by Panchayats, the rights and privileges granted to public and individuals and the taxes and exemptions granted to the concerned people are all brought out in them.

In the age of the Cholas, the most creative period of South Indian History, the whole of South India was for the first time brought under the sway of a single government and a serious attempt was made to face and solve the problems of public administration arising from the art, religion and letters. The Tamil country reached height of excellences, never reached again in succeeding ages. In all these spheres, as in that of foreign trade and maritime activity, the Chola period marked the culmination of movements that began in an earlier age under the Pallavas.

These inscriptions are replete with records of donations to temples for the purpose of burning lamps, conducting worship, repairing temple structure and constructing new temples. Donated objects are varied and included land, sheep, food, money, gold and Taxes on professions and productions. Donors and Donees were recorded with regnal years of the relevant kings in most of the inscriptions.

Besides the above mentioned data, those inscriptions supply details of kings' genealogical list, geography of the regions, particulars of wars and conquests, achievements of kings, literature, religion and technology in agriculture and so on. Further they provide the list of queens and other categories of women with their activities of public involvement. They all have been brought out in this research.

1.7 LIMITATIONS

However the inscriptions are not widely used by the historians. But for the historians working on medieval Tamil History, the sources for their study mainly are inscriptions, since inscriptions are the only mainstay for them. This thesis is based mainly on inscriptions which survived in large numbers in the medieval period. This

period includes the reign of Pallava, Pandya and Chola to Vijayanagara Kings. As these inscriptions contain lot of details about kingdom and society, they also prompt the study of social and cultural traits relating to women of this period. If all these areas are covered for the study, then it will become unwieldy. So the topic is restricted only to have an analysis of the facts about women as available in the inscriptions. Therefore this thesis is entitled **"The Position of Women in Tamilnadu as gleaned through the Inscriptions - 600 A.D. to 1800 A.D."** It presents substantial, analytical and critical facts on women drawn from the inscriptions of the research period.

Inscriptions, especially of this period, are superior to literature since in the first place, most of the original inscriptions are not generally tempered with and are strictly contemporary to most of the events mentioned in them; and in the second place there are also references to some social practices though they are often incidental. Very little information can be had from Pallava period. Further, these inscriptions available for the period of research consist with materials which prompt the study of the cultural and social traits of Tamils which could be used to highlight the role of women in this regard also.

As the Inscriptions will be leading to vast study, it becomes a must to have a restricted area of study in a crisp and detailed way. In this respect importance is commissioned to the study of the Tamil inscriptions which are also plenty and most of the records are published by the State and Central Governments of today. So, on the basis of such outcomes an attempt is made to have a clear idea about the condition of women during different periods. With the limited and restricted facts about women available in the inscriptions, attempts are made to have an estimate of women on the basis of the available materials in the inscriptions only. Therefore the research is restricted only to have an analysis of the facts about women as recorded in the inscriptions.

1.8 DATA COLLECTION

Data have been collected from various libraries in Chennai, Pudukkottai, Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Archeological department Tirumalai Nayakar Mahal, Sentamil College Library, Madurai, Gandhi Museum Library, Madurai, and Madurai Kamaraj University Library, Madras University Library, Government Museum Library, Madurai, Kannemara Library, Chennai, Government Archives, Chennai, Saraswathi Mahal Library, Tanjavur, Tamil University Library, Tanjavur, Mother Teresa Women University, Library, Kodaikanal, Central Library Madurai, Chennai Archeological Department.

1.9 ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The data collected have been analyzed and reported by using the descriptive method. Qualitative method is used to interpret the data.

1.10 CHAPTERIZATION

This research is divided into Nine chapters. The **first** chapter serves as an **Introduction** chapter. It highlights the need of this study on women and explains the formulation of the thesis giving the various aspects of the inscriptions and women. The methodology adopted for the thesis, sources for this study and chapterization are narrated in it.

The significant feature of the **second** chapter is the **'The Review of Literature'** which analyses the critical account of writings of various writers on women. These writings on women are varied.

The books of various authors mean different things to different people. From the ancient time itself, the writings on women reflect various pictures in the different contexts. These writings include Puranas, Idikasas, Literatures, Inscriptions and books of the recent centuries.

These books cover ancient Sangam to present period. Recent writers, particularly women writers set their writings on women in more comprehensive way with new perspectives of their life. Women writers like R.Vijayalakshmi and Thayammal Aravanan discuss the various levels of women in the historical contexts and stressed the necessity of writing on women in a new scale, averting the conventional methods. They express that this kind of writing will enable the writers to present the views in a better way and induce the readers to have better outlook and understanding on their life.

Since the women are the basic sources of growth and development of a society, the **third** chapter is assigned and that is entitled as **'The Tamil women'.** It will explicate the distinctive qualities of women through the ages. The condition of the Tamil women through the ages will also be described. As the Tamil society was a patriarchal one, the status of women was a secondary one even from the days of the Sangam. The personal traits of the women during that period were having their own individualities. The involvement of women in various professions and calling of them by their activities will assist a comparative study of the women of the subsequent period. Lot of women of distinctive caliber available in the Tamil society is disclosed by literature. While they were known for their scholarship during the Śangam age, there were many poetesses as Vennikuyathiyār, Nappassaliyār, Nachchellyār and others. But such a developed status of women met with a deterioration in the ensuing period and their status began to change. There emerged public women like Kanigayar, Kuthiyār, Nadagamahalir, Talicheripendir as well as Dēvadāsis and Dēvaradiyārs.

A discussion about such a status of women on the basis of various sources other than inscription will be beneficial for a comparative study. This chapter will also disclose the status, position and condition of women of the period taken up for study

from the dawn of the Śangam age to the end of the Nayak rule in the Tamil country on the basis of the different other sources excluding inscription.

The **fourth** chapter titled **'women and politics'** will pinpoint their position in politics and that will be an effort to examine their role in politics. Since the Tamil society centred on the axis of politics during the ancient and medieval periods, it is necessary to note the status of women under various rulers belonging to Pallava, Pāndya, Chōla, Hoysala Vijayanagar as well as Nayak kingdoms and to be analyzed in this chapter. All facts relating to this topic are the outcomes based on inscriptions. There are ample inscriptional references which contain details about women at times of political superiority during the rule of various powers. The early Tamil Brahmi inscriptions datable from second century B.C to third century A.D. have no references about women. But in the subsequent period of the Tamil inscriptions which came up under various rulers of the Pallava, Pāndya and Chōla periods have references to women which stand testimony to have an estimate of the status of Tamil women along with their position in the society, politics, economy, religion and so on. For instance, the Elavanasur inscription of the period of Vira Rajendra (1062 / 1063-70 A.D.) appreciates a woman who performed Sati (156 of 1906). Though it indicates that the wives, who lost their husbands, mainly to adopt their own chastity and also to escape the horror of widowhood they unhesitatingly came forward to give their lives by committing sati or self- immolation.

The status of the queens, their servants and attendants, the women of the different officials of the state are also analyzed in this chapter along with their contributions to the society on the basis of their capacities. While the general condition and position of women were not at all appreciable the same trend was not applicable to queens of the different rulers of different dynasties and different periods. For instance in the Sikanatha Śwamy temple of Kudumiyamalai there is an inscription of Kulōthunga I (1071-1122 A.D.) which offers equal status to the Goddess to his wife

Dharani Muludayāl. In the same way Kulothunga I's queen Bhuvana Muludayāl too gained the veneration offered to the Goddess. The queens were in possession of Dharani (earth) and Bhuvani (earth) and that testifies to the position enjoyed by the Chōla queens. So an endeavour is made in this chapter to highlight the role of women in politics. It will describe the various events which took place during the period of different rulers at different places and periods. As the rulers were the authorities to appoint Devaradiyars to various temples it is worth to notice the different activities executed by the Devaradiyars. The various activities carried out by different rulers with reference to women are also discussed in this chapter. The contacts between women and the then existed political condition, the contacts between the women and the rulers and his administrative staff will all be analysed.

Women were employed largely in the palaces as the body guards of the kings. They were given the opportunities for concentrating on developing their artistic skills. Further they were proficient in dance and music. From the period of the Cholas, the courtesans had to play a distinctive role in the capacity as devadasis or devaradiyar because they were dedicated by the parents willingly to the temples for executing the various religious services in the temples. Either due to religious conviction or poverty or out of compulsion of the elders of the family the tradition of devaradiyars or the devadasis (the maid servants of the deity) was introduced in the Tamil country during the Imperial Chola period. This socio- religious institution emerged during the Chola period was associated with the temple authorities and administrators. In this respect it is worth to note that the women due to their pious nature were ready to become a devadasi at the will of the parents.

At that time the devaradiyars were even permitted to marry. They too had economic freedom and were allowed to possess property in their names. They enjoyed the privilege of even disposing of their landed properties according to their own will. They were known for their pious and charitable mind and they had the

privilege of announcing grants for various purposes. They were experts in dance and music and executed their performances in the presence of the deity while it was in a procession. They were philanthropic in their attitudes. In some temples there were women administrators and they were called adhikarichi. They looked after the making of the ornaments for the God. They even were in-charge of weighing the jewels of the God. Women slaves were also there to execute the mean activities such as cleaning the temple, preserving the clean atmosphere of the temple etc. Thus their position was a unique one. They even served as nurses in the hospitals attached to the public places such as temples and mutts etc.

The treatment of women and the place assigned to women in the society too will be discussed in the **fifth** chapter entitled **'Women and the Society'**. The nature, qualities and traits of women in the society will be discussed. The importance and value of women will also be taken into account. The various aspects which are exclusively pertaining to women, such as Tali, Stridhanam, and the like will find their place in it. Their economic activities and their prospects, their characteristic qualities, their religious sentiments and so on will also be analysed in detail by keeping the inscriptions as primary sources. An attempt also will be made to notice the differences between the women depicted in other sources and women mentioned in the inscriptions. As it was a male dominated society and as kingship was a predominant aspect in the politics of the society the various ways and means employed by women in executing their services to the society will also be investigated. The various rights and privileges assigned to the women of different status will be enquired to expose their social status. Their contacts with family, society, temple and religion will also be considered. The services of women as wife, mother and daughter too will be highlighted.

The customs and traditions pertaining to women too will find place in this chapter. As women were subordinated to men one has to notice their position as

slaves, servant maids and devotees of God (Dēvaradiyārs or Dēvadasis). The associations of the dēvaradiyārs with different transactions based on deeds and contracts will be discussed to estimate the importance assigned to them.

The **Sixth** chapter titled **'Women in Religion'** mainly focus on the pious nature of queens and common women and their involvement in construction, reconstruction, renovation of temples and donations of materials, and livestock for the Temples.

The **Seventh** chapter **'Women's contribution to sacred practices in temples'** deals with the functions of women in respect of their contributions and donations to temple ritual practices and other activities. This reflects the charity activities of the queens and common women of the medieval period. These activities show the liberal attitude and economic prosperity of women of that period.

The **Eighth** chapter **'Dēvaradiārs and Temple Administration'** presents the picture about Devaradiars, one class of women of Tamil society. This chapter deals with the existences and presence of Dēvaradiārs in Tamil society and their valuable contributions to the promotion of art and dances in temples. How they were rewarded and honoured for their activities are also accounted in this chapter.

During the medieval period the ladies were dedicated to the temples. The Vira Pradaba Maharaya's inscription available at Thirumalai Kadambai temple at Nartha Malai, the Mahamandeswara Malligarjuna's Eswaran Temple inscription of Keelaikkurichi, Kodumbalur Musukundeeswara temple inscription which speaks about the dedication of Valithunai Perumal, Meyyar and Valithunai, the daughters of Adaikkalam Kathar etc., will attest the dedication of women as devaradiyars to temples by the parents. The Devaradiyars to maintain their status and prestige by offering different kinds of donations to the temples to which they were attached to. Even Mayilayi and her daughter called Ulagudayanachchi, the devaradiyars attached to the Sundararaja Perumal temple of Ponnamaravathi of Thirumeyyam Taluk were

approved by the temple authorities including the Koilpandaram. The Mariswarar temple inscription available at Rangiyam informs that one Umayammai was taken as the devaradiyar of that temple and was given the just place among the devaradiyars along with the title Naluthikkumvenra Mancikam. She was even offered house by the Srikoilpandaram as a mark of respect. The devaradiyars attached to the Choleeswara temple of Ponnamaravathi even donated a trisul to the primary deity of that temple. In honour of such a philanthropic act lands called Thirumanathukkani were granted to them and were also provided with six houses which were the possessions of the Thirumadaivilagam of that temple.

The status of Dēvaradiyār during that period was an appreciable one. Their position was unique and respectable one due to their affinity and attachment towards the deities. As the servants of God they were venerated by all sections of people. They were experts in different kinds of both vocal and instrumental music, dance and drama. They were also called Talicheri Pendir, Nadaga Kanigayar and so on. The post of Devaradiyar was a hereditary one. The daughter became a devadasi like her mother who was alive. They were the devotees or slaves of God and the ruler. Hence they were called Adiyar. The terms such as Mukkokilanadigal and Kilanadigal available in the inscriptions stressed the need for probing into such an analysis is an essential feature of history of the status of women.

The Dēvaradiyārs had their own customary practices and traditional activities. As pointed out by Marcopolo, the Venitian traveller, the young ladies dedicated themselves to God for achieving prosperity and to get good husbands in the future. Even housewives too served as devardiyars. They were identified with the emblem of trisul.

The Dēvaradiyārs attached to the temples were having landed possessions. Hence they were able to donate things needed to the temple and as they were

accepted one can have an estimate of the status enjoyed by them. As they were attached to the temples they even functioned as women servants of the temple. It is evident from the references available in the Suramudayanayinar temple at Madathukkoil, which state that one Alagiyanachchi Pillandal, a Dēvaradiyār of that temple had assigned cash endowments for covering the idol of the primary deity with sandalwood paste. Since the Dēvaradiyārs were in possession of the Devadana lands they had even sold their lands for meeting out the expenses for the execution of daily rituals of the Malayamangai temple of Kudumiyamalai. The Nattar, the Koil Kanakkar and Devakanmigal estimated the services and contributions of the Dēvaradiyārs of the temple and venerated them with proper endowment grants. The Taramangalam Agasteeswara Temple inscription informs that lands were granted to a private lady who dedicated her life for the cause of the temple. To venerate her act the lands were assigned as tax free iriyili land.

The pious women, who served as devaradiyars were specific in maintaining the temple lands. A lady called Ammai Alvi, associated with the Eswaran temple at Kulathur offered grains to be sold and used for providing irrigation facilities to the Kudinīkka Dēvadāna lands of the temple. The devaradiyars attached to the temples too had their due shares in the properties distributed to the temples by the authorities.

An inscription of one Veerappana Udayar available in the Vadhapureeswara temple of Kunnandarkoil informs that a Devaradiyar, attached to the temple, called Adanamalagiyar, daughter of Nallapillai Perral had donated seven pillars to that temple. Due to the dedicated services of the Devaradiyar, the sons of the Devaradiyar of Thirumalaikkadambar Koil too were granted lands, houses and title called Sundeswara Marayan. Such facts indicates the status assigned by the Devaradiyars attached to various temples due to their involvement in religious and charitable activities. Even the members of the family of the Devaradiyars were also venerated.

The **Ninth** that is final chapter will be a **concluding** one. The outcomes of the different facts discussed under various headings previously will be described in a comprehensive way. In general it will be a summary of the facts derived from the analysis made. It will throw light on the different aspects of women as found in the inscriptions.

The status and position of Tamil women as depicted by the inscriptions reveal that their position was not at all constant due to floating conditions. But their position was always a subordinated one to law, justice, social norms and traditions as well as customs. Besides, they have more freedom and rights in respect of charitable activities and other areas like land holdings and the like.

Thus the analysis of the position of women in Tamilnadu as gleaned through the inscriptions will widen the scope in adding a new chapter in the social history of the Tamil country. Further as the inscriptional evidences are more primary and authentic historical sources in nature the facts revealed by them could never be neglected by historians. Above all as the women of the Tamil country are known for their individualistic traits and qualities when compared with the treatment of women of other countries one has to notice their actual position in the society as depicted by the inscriptions. Since no such effort is hitherto be attempted by any other scholar an attempt is made on that line in this thesis. That will be beneficial for having an estimate on the values of inscriptions and the cultural glories maintained by the Tamil women through the ages. Mainly to have an estimate of the culture of the Tamils by analysing the role of women in various activities an attempt is made. The comparative analysis of the qualities and traits of women through the ages will help the progress and development of the status and condition of women through the ages under various political, social and economic conditions in Tamilnadu. Further this research views women based on inscriptions in more comprehensive way and reflect the proper analysis on the position and status of women of the research period.

CHAPTER II

THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chapter - II

THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter attempts to explore the writings of various authors on women and presents their views on women in respect of their position, status, functions and contributions. The books of various authors mean different things to different people. From the ancient time itself the writings on women reflect various pictures about them in the different contexts. These writings include Puranas, Ithikasas, Literatures, Inscriptions and books of the recent centuries.

These books cover ancient Sangam and Medieval periods to recent times. Recent writers, particularly women writers set their writings on women in more comprehensive way with new perspectives of their life.

1.Tamilaka Makaḷir : Totakka Kālamutal Āram nṟrantu varai R.Vijayalakshmi* (Tamil), 2010

This book, authored by R.Vijayalakshmi, is in Tamil and deals with the position, status and other aspects of women from ancient period to 6th century A.D. Tamil Literature is the prism of Tamil society. Based on these Literatures of ancient wisdom, she discusses the various issues related to various stages in the life of woman with historical, social and feminist approaches.

This book opens with stressing on the necessity of writing on women in a new scale averting the conventional method. This kind of writings will enable the writers to present the views in a better way and induce the readers to have a better outlook and understanding on their life.

* This book is in Tamil written by Dr.R.Vijayalakshmy. She obtained Ph.D., Degree from Oxford University in 1972. She had many reputation as a researcher being served in Hamburg University in Germany and University of California, Berkley Campus. She has also worked in International Institute of Tamil Studies, Chennai and rose to Associate Professor when she was retired. She has written eight books, among them two books won the award of Tamil Development Department.

The first chapter gives a common picture on women. The responsibility of protecting the family and the country was far more greater for men than women because of a war society in the beginning. Various Kings ruled various Kingdoms and plunged into war often for various reasons. This naturally led the men to hold various responsibilities in the area of protection and other fields. At the same time whatever the fields in which women had performed their responsibilities must be looked upon in a better way that will lead to proper understanding of women. Their contribution to family in caring and fostering children is a significant one as the family is the basic unit of society.

How the birth of women is welcomed in such a war society and various stages in course of their life are discussed. This chapter speaks about the women from birth to marriage and, the ruling of moral codes on women.

The second chapter titled 'Women and Marriage' describes the formulation of family through the free association of the lovers in a proper and restricted sense and then by socially accepted marriage system of Sangam period. It also compares the Tamilian marriage system with Aryan marriage system and explains the differences. This aspect have not been totally diminished. Yet it has its reflection in the modern Tamil Society.

Then comes the description of women in family which gives another phase of recognition and status to women in their life. At the same time the family women were expected to face the new situation and give their potential contribution to the family as well as to the society. The women of that period came under the ruling of moral codes which is peculiarly found in Tamil society rather than any other society. Yet the moral codes of chastity and obedience were stressed to women, but not to men. This aspect is discussed by the author providing some examples from Sangam period.

The author narrates in the beginning of this chapter, how the ruling of moral code on women got shape and introduced. In the ancient time the children are identified by the relationship with mother before the arrangement of marriage system which ruled by matriarchy came into form a group or a society. After this type of society got diminished, the group or race began to acquire exclusive claim. When this type of society came into existence the marriage system was regulated and the moral codes like chastity and monogamy in marriage were introduced. However it seems that these moral codes are not thrushed to men. The men's courtship with prostitutes and the practice of prostitution in society provides evidences to this.

Then one more point regarding chastity is recorded in this chapter. That worshipping other gods rather than husbands by married women reflects dishonesty on women. This is because the stress is that married women should honour and worship their husbands. The following kural says that if such a woman commands the rain, then it will rain instantly.

> Behold the woman who worshipes not the Gods,
> But worshipes her husband even as she rises from bed
> the rain cloud obeys her commands. (6:55)

This kural attributes super power to women and reflects the subordination of women to men. Silappathikaram and Manimekalai, the two Tamil epics also present Kannaki and Manimekalai in this way and describes their acts in a superficial way.

Then the origin of Sati and its practices in a different ways are dealt with few evidences. This also reflects the character of chaste women because in those days the survival is hard for widows. Yet the author says that this is not compulsion in those days. The women who embrace Sati following the death of their husband are categorized into three types. The woman who dies immediately or embrace fire as soon as she received the news about the death of her husband come under first

category. Those who enter into fire along with the firing of death body of their husband after rituals or other means come under second category. Those who decided to observe the widowhood with prescribed restrictions in the habit of food and movement come under third category. The author says that the first category is known as 'Thalai Karpu' (Thalai means first or primary, Karpu means chastity) and other two are known as 'Idai Karpu' and 'Kadai Karpu'. This may be due to the belief by women that the observation of chastity in this way may be rewarded. Further it is mentioned by the author that this is not a peculiar practice observed in Tamilnadu only and this has rooted in Indian system. However the practice of widowhood mostly affects the life of woman and denies the advances that are available to other women of that period.

In this regard, one incident is quoted by the author. While Koperumpendu attempted to embrace fire following the death of her husband Puthapandian, the elders tried to stop her. Reacting to it, she said that she doesn't want to live observing widowhood with simple mixed food of rice and sessame seeds, boiled green leaves with Tamarind and sleeping on the floor without mat. Further she told them that funeral fire may be hard and cruel to them, but to her, funeral fire and cold water Tank are the same (puram.246)

In the fourth chapter the author refers to so many other incidents related to Sati and widowhood from Literatures and tells how the women had faced such hard practices in those days. But Madavi's expression in reference to observation of Sati following death of her husband, Kovalan is a revolutionary remark. She told Vasanthamalai who was sent by her mother Chitrapathy to instigate her to Sati, that she didn't want to lead a worthless life and decided to become a monk in Buddhist monastry and lead a better life. She also told her that she will send her daughter, Manimekalai, to the same order.

Then the author deals about art, prostitution and ascetic practice of women. These subjects are explained based on religious Literatures.

Finally the author expects that reading of this scholarly work will make women move through various steps to achieve the emancipation. She also exhorts the writers to reflect creative and new waves of views in their writings on women and avoid conventional methods.

2. Tamilaka Varalāru : Makkalum Panpādum : Dr.K.K.Pillai*, 2007

In writing the history of Tamilnadu, the author presents his views giving much importance to social and cultural aspects of Tamils. The brief accounts on women in respect of the various aspects of life in various contexts in the history of Tamilnadu are given spasmodically. Tamil Literature, prosody, inscriptions, copper plates, anthropological excavation notes, foreign accounts, rare coins etc. are used as sources for this book. He refers to Sangam Literature which explains the life of Kalavu (Before marriage), Karpu (chastity) and departure of husband from wife for sometime to earn wealth or due to infatuation with prostitutes. These facts indicate that women were treated as subordinates in such a patriarchal society.

The author has accounted how women were treated in family system : while husband departed due to higher education or earnings or royal duties, the custom of wife accompanying with him was not in vogue. She has to remain in home observing chastity and performing all other duties related to family and fostering the children. The practice of Sati is also accounted here.

The passages from Tholkappiam, Kurunthogai, Ingurunooru, Agananooru, Purananooru, Narrinai and Thirukkural are quoted by the author to stress those facts.

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* This Tamil book by Dr.K.K.Pillai was published by International Institute of Tamil Studies, Chennai. He had been a Director, Institute of Traditional Cultures of South and South East Asia and former professor of Indian History, University of Madras. He had authored many books about Tamilnadu History.

The subtitle on women in the fourteenth chapter entitled as Tamil society in Chola period (from 10th century A.D. to 13th century A.D) presents the condition of women in Chola period. It says that women lived with more freedom without restrictions.

Chastity and morality are the ornaments to women. Women had property rights. Kings and wealthy people followed polygamy. But this system was not found among the common men. The Sati was not compulsory to women in this period also. But few inscriptions reveal that this practice was found in few cases of Queens. One of the inscriptions informs the reason for this. It says that a woman who lost her husband exhorted that people surrounding her should not stop her from succumbing to fire along with her husband, instead they should help her throwing into fire binding her with thread because if she continues to live she must do slavery service to her husband's another wife or mistress. The Queens participated in the administration of the Kings. Many Queens like Sembian Madevi of Chola period contributed to construction and renovation of Temples and its services. They donated gold, land and sheeps to temples for offering food, keeping lamps and performing sacred rites.

These facts are accounted in the following epigraphs : Ep.Rep.156/1906, S.I.I. III. No.146., Ep.Rep.252/1937, Ep.Rep.540/20, Ep.Rep.572/20. In addition to these activities, Devaradiyars performed many entertainments like singing and dancing. Devaradiyars also fostered the music and dance of minstrels of Sangam period. So many inscriptions are quoted in view of these activities of Devaradiyars which gave due recognition to them.

The author has recorded the actual facts about the women with his remarks on their position and functions in those period based on the Tamil Literatures, inscriptions and other sources in this book.

3. A History of South India, from Prehistoric Times to the fall of Vijayanagar : K.A. Nilakanta Sastri (English)*, 1998

The book by the great historian K.A.Nilakanta Sastri narrates the History of South India. In his narration, the nature and role of women of the ancient and medieval periods are referred in various context. This help to understand the condition of women of those periods. Various sources of these periods are used by the author in support of his views.

The author says that the queens held a position of equal importance with kings in the royal court and administration. Two instances were cited in this regard. Silabhattarika, wife of Dhruva bore the titles Parameswari and Paramabhattarika. She issued her own orders to the executives in giving grants of land at her will. Another queen, Rangapataka, the wife of Pallava Rajasimha, interested herself in the construction of Kailasanatha Temple (P.152).

Regarding education, the princess of royal family got good education in literature and fine arts. On occasions, some princess were quite equal to the task of administration and war. For example, Akkadevi, a Chalukyan princess and elder sister of Jeyasimha II carried on the administration of a province and involved in fights and sieges. Queens of Hoysala Ballala I's were excelled in music and dancing. Sovaladevi, the queen of Kalacuri Sovideva displayed her arts in large assemblies attended by nobles, scholars and artists from different countries. According to the description of the Portuguese chronicler and other foreign writers, it is understood that Vijayanagara queens lived with costly establishments and had large number of women attendants. Their clothes and jewellary show that they were lavish and extravagant. It is also learnt that there were women poets in the provincial court of

* K.A.Nilakanta Sastri was professor of History at the University of Madras. This is a pioneering work which has the distinction of being a standard book on South Indian History, expressed by R.Champakalakshmi in her introduction to this book. R.Champakalakshmi retired as Professor of History, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Ragunatha Nayaka of Tanjore. They were capable of producing works in various languages. The role of women in high society was varied and pleasant. Sati had a place in high society. (286)

It is also mentioned in the book that the kings led on extravagant and luxurious life in the palace with large establishments in which there were large number of women attendants. They were chosen for their youth and beauty. They were imported women from abroad as well as women captured in war and enslaved. Many courtesans were excelled in music and dancing (285-286).

K.A.Nilakanta Sastri have presented the views on women with historical point of view and identified some of the facts related to the status of women in various levels. The queens and women of wealthy class led luxurious and pompous life and enjoyed more power rather than common women. These facts reflect the treatment of women and informs the various ranks of women in society.

4. The Tamils 1800 years ago : V.Kanakasabhai (English)*, 2000

This book gives a description of history of Tamils during the period of Pandya, Chola and Cheras. It also presents the views on social life of Tamils which include the description of women relating to their condition in the earlier period.

There is a brief account on Tamil women regarding their social life which informs about their dress, ornaments, houses and social movements found in various classes of women in the IX chapter on Social Life. According to this account, it seems that there is vast disparity among the various levels of women. It is appropriate to quote the words of the author to know the status and functions of women in society.

"Women mixed freely though modestly in the business and amusements of social life. In Towns and cities women of the poor classes were employed as hawkers,

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* A series of Articles on the "Tamils Eighteen Hundred Years Ago", contributed by the author to Madras Review between the years 1895 and 1901, has been brought up into book form by him.

vendors and shop keepers or as servants in rich households; and in the villages they worked in the fields and gardens along with men, and shared their hardships. The ladies of the higher classes were more confined to their homes, but they were not secluded from society. From the Queen downward every woman visited the temples. During the evenings they came out on the terraces of their houses, and saw the scenes in the street; and on festive occasions, they joined the processions, and went out to invite their friends and relations (Chilapathikaram, I.36,37) Owing to the freedom enjoyed by women, it was possible for young people to court each other before marriage. It was not considered improper for a young lady even to elope with her lover, provided they returned to their relations afterwards, and entered into married life. Love, not the greed of gold, ruled the court, the camp and the grove, in those days..... (p.120). It seems that this custom of earlier period has not yet died out entirely in Tamilakam.

A note on queen says that the queen enjoyed privacy in the palace and got equal seat on the throne along with the king. "A portion of the palace was always set apart for the use of the queen and her attendants. She did not wear a crown unless she had inherited the monarchy in her own right. On all public occasions she took her seat on the throne along with the King; but her apartments in the palace were not accessible to males (Nedunalvadai).

The author has narrated the stories of Kannaki and Manimekalai based on the twin epics of Silappathikaram and Manimekalai. Silappathikaram stresses that ethics in life are more important. Manimekalai explains the religious life led by Manimekalai.

In Manimekalai Madhavi tells that she was unable to die instantly or willing to give life following the death of her husband, Kovalan. However she seems to be surpassed the custom of Sati although that is stressed by her mother through maid

servant Vasantha Malai. She declared that her daughter will never live a worthless life as occurred in the case of Kannaki's wrath following the unjust execution of Kovalan. This fact reflects the new solution to the problem of Sati. This is the picture about women of earliest Tamil society given by the author in this book.

5. Chōlar Kālathuk Kōyilum Samugamum : (Saiva Temples in Midieval Tamiḻnādu based on Chōlas Inscriptions of Saivite Temples in Tamilnadu): Dr.V.Maheswaran*(Tamil), 2008

The 3rd separate chapter on Temples and women of this book speaks about women in the context of Temple service and other social activities related to Sangam to Chola period. It speaks about the various kinds of women functionaries and other types of women which include dancers, menial servants in temples and devaradivars. (p.84)

As the society was matriachical in the beginning, the women began to acquire importance in the family function as well as in social activeties. The literature of Sangam period and devotional literature are replete with large number of evidences to show that women were considered as Goddess and allowed to subordinate services in temples. Women Sains like Karaikalammaiar, Andal, Thilakavathiar and Mangairkarasiar were mentioned in devotional Literatures. 'Koyil Pinakkal' mentioned by the Saint Manikkavasakar, denotes a kind of service women in temples. The word 'unparalleled women' used by Thirumangai Alvar in his hymn, refers the godly nature women. A few hymns refer to the dancing girls and the dances in temples. (85-86).

The queens and Brahmin women involved in temple and charity activities. The author refers to the donation of lands to the temple by Sarudevi, queen of

* The author is a professor, Tamil Department, Perathanai University, Sri Lanka. He got a Diploma in Temple Architecture from Karaikudi Alagappa University and Ph.D. from Tamil University, Tanjore.

Vijayamarthanda, found in one of the copper plates and inform that Rangapathagai a queen of Rajasimhan was portayed as dancer.

Citing large number of examples like this, he says that women were considered as Goddess and at the same time, they were made to involve into menial services and dancing performances. They were also dedicated to temples as devaradiars. (p.87)

The queens of Chola Emphire had honourable social status. The mixed marriages are found among the Kings of various kingdoms. One of the queens of Adhithya Chola I is Thripuvanamadevi of Pallava dynasty. The queen of Paranthaka I is a daughter of Chera king. Śembiyan Mādēvi, daughter of hill tribe king Malavarayan, is the queen of Kandarathitha Chola. Kundavaiyar who is the Queen of Arinjayan, is queen of Venki Nadu. Malapadi Thennavan Madevi and Vanavan Madevi are the queens of other tribes from other kingdoms, who got married to chola kings. In meykirthi their deeds are accounted. The queens of chola period were devotees of Siva. The inscriptions of Chola period refer to constructive and charitable activities. Apart from this, there are references about the wives of Chola administrators and women who were rewarded with laurels for their services to the temples. Wives of brahmin officials, women from family of landlords and other women known as Vellatti and Manavatti are also involved in similar activities. The women held many positions in the administrative system of chola kingdom. (pp.97-100).

There were one class of women known as Devaradiyars. They carried on works like cleaning temples, cleaning and preparing rice and tying flowers. Few were excelled in chanting Devaram hymns, dance and music. Tracing the information from inscriptions, the author had explained elaborately about them. The Devaradiar system was popular in chola period and got honourable recognition.

Many inscriptions of Chola country show them as dancers, Temple officials, donors and menial servants. Based on these informations and texts of dances, the relation of devaradiars with temples and the positions held by them, could be traced out. The author has registered seven types of Devaradiars.

1. Thathai : voluntarily dedicated to Temple service.
2. Devotee : Dancing in Temple because of vigorous devotion.
3. Vigruthai : Woman who sold her to temple.
4. Piruthai : Involved into temple service for the welfare of the family.
5. Haruthai : Sold to Temple under compulsion.
6. Alangarai : Selected for Temple on merit by the King or any one.
7. Uruthira Kanigai : Dancing for wages (p.111)

The author says that there were women priests and they were known as 'Devaratti'.

The above informations are not mere symbols, but they show that women have acquired importance in religion, temple services, administrative services and social activities. But the importance to women in the forthcoming period began to deteriorate gradually, the author feels. In course of time individuality of women were not considered. The moral codes ruled the family women. Duties to women are stressed in family. They were separated from other kinds of women. Women Artists were separated and discriminated. The author quotes the words of vetran Tamil scholar T.P.Meenakshisundaranar in this regard.

"The past society categorized women into two kinds. In order to make few women living with chastity, few more women were made as harlots by the society. Losing herself and to live alive for the sake of the society, the art is the only course

that she had to take for survival. Woman artists were turned into hired prostitutes. Therefore chaste women were forbidden of Art life". (pp.112-113).

6. Valluvarum Mahalirum : T.P.Meenakshisundaram (Tamil)*, 2011

The author points out five issues which reflect negative opinions about women, surviving in the minds of Tamil people from the earliest period. He says that they are fallacies. He challenges that they have no base in Thiruvalluvar's kural which is considered as Tamil ethical text.

The first two chapters discuss the issue of women being considered and treated as slaves. The author refutes and condemns this opinion as this is not the concept of earliest Tamilagam.

The author says that there are four points based on which these attitudes on women began to root and develop. He deals one by one in subsequent chapters and concludes that this is not acceptable to Valluvar. Many Kurals from Thirukkural and verses from Tamil Literatures are quoted by the author in support of his arguments.

In the beginning both men and women led a equitable life. But in course of time, society turned into a war society. The man began to acquire primary position and the woman was pushed behind. Therefore it is thought that discipline, control and restriction on movement is necessary for women to keep chastity. This is the first cause. Another thinking is that woman is incapable of making the partner to lead a moral life. The third fact is that as woman lacks morale, what right could be ensured to them. It is better for them to lead a life in obedience to men. The fourth assumption is that owing to these facts, women are inferior and their elevation through any means is impossible.

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* The author was a great scholar of Tamil Literature and linguist. He had been a first Vice-Chancellor Madurai Kamaraj University.

Based on these four pillars of attitudes on women, men built their castle in the sky and exposed women as slaves to men.

But Thiruvalluvar did not accept any one of these assumptions on women. The first assumption that as women are weakminded and naive, discipline and control is necessary for women to keep chastity has no base in Tirukkural, the author argues.

He provides so many supports to strengthen this point. Particularly, he quotes kurals which stress the morale to women that will keep them better. The following two kurals are quoted to ascertain this fact.

"What is there that is grander than woman, when she is strong in the strength of her chastity" (6:4)

"Of what avail is close confinement? It is her own continence that is the best guardian of a woman's virtue" (6:7)

Thus the Thirukkural contains no discriminative views on women, according to the author of this book.

The second chapter deals with the opinion that renunciation of women is necessary to lead a penance and ascetie life and expect salvation, as they were considered as impediments to this process. The authour says that this is also a fallacy because Valluvar emphasises a process of asceticism passing through family. According to Valluvar even a householder, if he observes vows and lead a virtuous life, is greater saint than those who lead a penance life. (Kural 5:8).

Another Kural says,

> "Behold the man whose heart is fixed in truthfulness
> He is greater than the austere and greater than he that
> makes gifts to the poor (30:5)

According to Kural, the observance of virtues like purity of mind, truthfullness, noninjury to all lives and self-control is more essential to lead a penance life. Therefore renunciation is only a means. Reunification in mind, heart and deed is essential. This is what Valluvar says. He does not discriminate women in this regard. He condemns only artificial asceticism.

Then the problem of whether woman is slave or life partner is discussed in subsequent three chapters quoting the verses from Thirukkural.

The author explained the essential nature of love before and after marriage, the nature of harlot and the nature of family, providing many verses from the Kural. Above all, the one Kural is enough to say that woman is not slave but life partner according to Thiruvalluvar.

She is the good helpmate who possesseth every wifely virtue and spendeth not above her husband's means. (Kural 6:1)

Stressing this point, he deals on it eloborately in three chapters quoting large number of Kurals.

7. Mahā Kavi Bharāthīar's Pennīyak-k-Katturaigal (Poet Bhārathiar's essays on feminism) Dr.K.Pañjāngam (Ed) (Tamil)*, 2000.

This book is a collection of thirty five essays on women written by Bharathiar on various occasions during his life time.

These essays proclaim Bharathiar's revolutionary views on women in respect of their education, liberation, emancipation in the context of Indian culture and civilization. Many things have been redefined by Bharathiar according to his vision of woman.

* Dr.K.Panjangam belongs to Kanji Mamunivar Centre for Post Graduate Studies, Pondicherry. This book has been edited by him and published by an organisation known as Barathi Anbargal. By speaking about liberation of women, this book answers to the conventional thinkers on women.

The Barathiar's vision of woman is one who is liberated and new kind of woman. Women are advised by him throughout his essays that they should resist and refuse to live in a situation in which the prevalence of equality among both the sexes is absent. They should resist to live like a slave. Yet this is the time for such a resistance.

All other issues related to marriage and other positions in society could be alleviated if they are provided with freedom of equality and education. Therefore he says that if the standard of men is to be raised, the women should be uplifted. As the women are raised so the men will be naturally risen to height.

The woman should have more freedom in deciding their marriage and divorce. They should also learn to foster our culture and live according to it. India is an ancient civilization and its culture is prolonged one. While women are living with modern standards of life, it is also their duty to patron their ancient culture and wisdom.

Knowledge is power. Therefore women should acquire knowledge and lead a life which could not be challenged even by the west. They should cross all the impediments for progress like religion, caste and creed. They should also contribute to create such a conflictless society.

Barathiar is a great exponent and advocator of feminism in the modern world. The essence of these essays on women emphasizes Neoliberal woman with a sense of tradition and culture.

8. Varalattril Devadasikal : C.S.Murugesan (Tamil)*, 2009

Tamilnadu contains one class of women known as Devadasis. This book discusses elaborately about their origin, development of Devadasis of Tamilnadu and their rise and fall in the history.

* Born in Puducheri, rose to height by becoming a great writer of history, Art and culture. This book in Tamil is a master piece of his research on Devadasi system. He was a receipient of 'Tholkappiar award' from Puducheri Government.

The author says that the origin of devadasi system is not yet precisely traced out. However, some puranas like Padma puranam and Mathsyapuranam owe it to divine origin of Art of Dance. This book presents the view that they were the descendants of Urvasi, a damsel.

Besides these uncertain facts, the history identifies the Devadasis as a group of cultivated, advanced and skilled artists surviving from Sangam period. (p.86)

Devadasi literally means a woman dedicated to the service of God in temples. They were excellent in dance and music. They were devotees in temples and contributed to the development of art and dance to the greatest extent. (pp.81-88)

This system was in vogue throughout the world, not only in Tamilnadu and India. This had rooted in Greek also. But they were called by various names. The custom of temple women doing services in the temples has precedent in the history and continued even from Sumerian civilization - 3500 B.C.

Then the author discusses the nature and treatment of this system under Pallava, Pandya and Chola regimes. Inscriptions inform that this custom in temple is continuing even before these regimes, but they got support and acquired honour, dignity and popularity in these regimes. These Devadasis are also known as Talicheri Pendir- (dancer) attached to the temples.

Music and dance were developed by these temple women known as devadasis during Pallava period. This point was supported by the author quoting Devaram hyms and inscriptions of the Pallava Kings (pp 97-100)

During Chola period, the dance performances by devadasis in temples were popular. These devadasis include women captured in war by the Chola kings. Devadasis are not only dancers but also menial servants in temples. The author quotes one inscription of Thiruvottriyur Athipuriswarar Temple which informs that five

women named Perianachi, Mali Karuththalvi, Thiruvandi and Vadukalvi were donated for the work of pounding paddy.

The inscription of Tanjore Temple of 29th year of Rajarajan I, informs the detailed views on Talicheri Pendir. They were also a group of devadasis. Tali means Temple. Talicheri means a group of temple servants living together in surrounding places of Temples. They were appointed for doing services in Siva Temples. (pp.101-102)

These women include captive women of war, dedicated women of high-class and dedicated women due to poverty. They were empowered with many rights. They have rights to procure, sell and donate lands. They have rights to marry the men of their choice. These informations are found in inscriptions and literatures. (p.109)

However, in later years their importance began to diminish and they began to sink in troubles. Therefore they decided to build assets and try to live on their foot averting the dependence. Temple services became part-time activity for them. They began to offer training in dance and music for others on payment and thus earn money. This system continued upto Nayaka period in Tamilnadu. This system got degraded and devadasis were branded with prostitution.

During the British period, this system met its end. Dedication prevention act 1929 was passed in Madras Legislative Assembly by the effort of Dr.Muthulakshmi Reddi, who is also a descendent of devadasi family and rose to height. She worked for its eradication. In continuation of eradication of devadasi system, a law to prohibit this system came into execution in 1947.

Then the author speaks about the rise and fall of Devadasi system in Puducheri. Then he has accounted the charity activities of devadasis. Following this, the author moves to express about prostitutes as accounted in Tamil literary texts like Thirupugal and Virali vidu thuthu. The proverbs relating to prostitutes are presented in the last chapter of this book.

This book deals with the history of devadasis in terms of uniqueness and degradation. Then it discusses also the off shoot of this system, a prostitution. This book is a factual and wonderful expression about one class of women of Tamil society.

9. Dēvadāsi system in medieval Tamilnādu : Dr.K.Sadasivam (English)*, 2011

An attempt has been made in this book to describe devadasi system which was popular more than 1500 years in Tamilnadu and other areas of India in respect of its inception, flourishment and deterioration, and relate the facts to cover the other side of their life also, which reflects their valuable contribution to temple services and promotion of Art, music and drama etc.

This book based mainly on inscriptions, monuments, literary sources and field surveys. However, the inscriptions are the major sources of this book.

The beginning chapters explore both the mythological and historical origin of this system. The Puranas about them indicate that they were descendents from heaven and celestial damsels. The book points out the historical origin also and quotes the remarks of S.Muthulakshmi Reddi. Criticizing the mythical theories, S.Muthulakshmi Reddi said, "These people are neither descended from heaven nor imported from foreign countries, but they belong to us, they are our own kith and kin".

Apart from these facts, the author presents few more views relating to their origin. According to Meenakshi who belonged to a devadasi family of Thanjavur, relates its origin with the beginning of parattaiyar or ganikayar profession.

There are more opinions surviving about them. These are expressed in various terms and various contexts. They were also dasis, pertaining to public hartolts. They were also experts in dance, music and drama.

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* He had been Professor in the Dept.of History, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University and retired. He had concentrated on the study of Inscriptions for many years. Still he is in this field. He had used inscriptions as major source for this book.

The other important areas of this system covered by the author is related to their life and services in the religious sphere. Devadasi, literally means the woman dedicated to service of God. It is not an easy process to become a devadasi. To become a devadasi any girl has to go through a few sanskaras or "rites of passage" as follows :

1. Ritual marriage (2) branding ceremony (3) initiation into the performing arts (4) debut (arengeru), (5) duties, (6) funeral honours.

Materials which are available from sixth century A.D. to 18th century A.D. reveal these facts which suggest the transformation of a girl into 'ever-auspicious female' of devadasi system. (p.45)

Ritual marriage is a kind of spiritual marriage which means participation in divine life prescribed for new entrants into Temple service.

The author furnished few Epigraphic and literary materials which throw light on a few instances of girls thus married to the deity. Those who entered into spiritual marriage are branded with some symbol (muthirai). It means that they are in perpetual bondage to the temples. This indicates two things : (1) no freedom to slave girl to go out of temple service (2) clearly identified to which temple, Siva or Vishnu, she belonged to.

Among the evidences provided by the author in this regard, Antal's marriage with Sri Ranganatha is an example of bridal dedication. The author says that there are two kinds of dedication like voluntary and non voluntary in the devadasi system. All these girls have to perform various kinds of duties in the temples. Common duties are singing and dancing. They involved in painting and other allied arts. They were also entrusted with the duty of looking after the flower gardens in the temples. They carried on menial services like husking paddy, cleaning rice and kitchen vessels,

bringing water for worship, cleaning and decorating the surroundings, washing the clothes of deities and preparation of scented powders and other things necessary for the temple poojas.

For these duties, they were rewarded with some remuneration according to the wealth of the Temples and Kings who patronised them.

These rewards include grant of paddy, land and villages, sustenance allowance in the form of cooked rice balls, golds and ornaments. The devadasis also contributed to temple construction and donated lands and ornaments. These contributions by devadasis made them to have their names immortalized in the inscriptions. The author provided large number of inscriptions, related to their benefactions.

The glorious devadasi system began to meet ill glorious period under the subsequent period in Tamilnadu History, slowly this came to an end. However they held mighty position in respect of their art, music, dance and bakthi.

This book gives a narration about one class of women in respect of their achievement, honourable position in Temples and deterioration due to historical changes including foreign invasion.

10. History and Culture of Tamilnadu - Chitra Mahadevan (English)*,1966

This book explores the history and culture of Tamilnadu based on Sanskrit inscriptions existed during the Pallava, Pandya, Chola and their chieftains regimes upto 14th century A.D.

Particularly the 5th chapter titled 'Social Life' attempts to express the views on the role of women in society which throw light on the status and functions of the women of those periods. The book presents few interesting views on the women of that period.

* Dr.Chitra Mahadevan obtained her Ph.D. degree in Ancient History and Archaeology from the University of Mysore. She was awarded the Junior followship in Epigraphy of the Department of Culture, Government of India for the period 2001 - 2003.

The author says that women have traditionally had a more passive role to play in Indian society than men. The Sangam classics reveal that women did not occupy equal status with men, but at the same time had attained high level of excellence in cultural spheres. The chastity of women and their role as devoted housewives have been stressed in the kural. These inscriptions reveal that the practice of Sati was prevalent in the Sangam and medieval period and women of these ages from different state of society made many endowments in their own rights. (pp.136-137)

Then the position of queen is dealt with. The queens of the Tamil country during the ancient and mediaeval periods did not take an active part in the administration of the kingdom. However they played important roles in the religious sphere by building temples and shrines, renovating the temples, installing images of various deities and making endowments to the temples. Further the names of the consorts of the Tamil Kings and chieftains are furnished in these inscriptions. They praise their qualities and reveal their honourable position in the Kingdom. Few examples are cited in this book by the author. Carudevi, the queen of Pallava king Vijaya Buddhavarman who made an endowment to Vishnu temple is the first inscriptional reference in respect of involvement of queens into endowment activities. In this regard, Rangapataka, queen of Pallava king Rajasimha, Reva, a Rastrakuta princess and the chief queen of Nandivarman II, Sankha a Rastrakuta princes and queen of Nandivaraman III are quoted. The author furnishes few more names of the queens.

These inscriptions reveal the fact that the polygamy was in vogue among the kings and racial marriages among kings were adopted.

The queens along with their king husbands have been depicted in sculpture and painting in the temples. The kings treated the queens with honourable positions in Royal court and other places. But when the kings conquered other kingdoms in

war and captured queens and women, they were ill-treated by the kings. Few incidents are quoted by the author in this regard. An epigraph of Rajaraja I mentions the plight of the queens of the Kerala king who was van quished by this chola ruler and who were forced to take refuge at his feet. The Karandai plates reveal the Rajendra I, having defeated the ruler of Lanka, captured even his queen wife and his daughter. Tiruvalangadu plates state that the queens of the chalukyan ruler Jayasimha experienced the distress when their husband was killed by the cholas in the battle. These incidents are the examples.

Thus the book presents the merit and demerit aspects of the position and respect held by the women of ancient and medieval Tamilnadu.

11. Pēnnin Perumai : Thiru V.Ka. (Tamil)*, 2004

This book reflects the feminist views of the author who tried to find out reasons for treating the women as inferior to men in socio-political and economic configurations and express his opinion in favour of equality of both sexes providing evidences from literatures and modern views.

Then he presents the ideal women of his perception. The God Siva is related to have married a Goddess woman. This type of portrayal of God as married couple remains as an example for the life for others and shows the pride and mightiness of a woman. Thus the author defined the woman with nice qualities and men with violent qualities. Therefore the saints and sages are possessed with these femine qualities in men. This differentiate between sexes led him to say that where women are not honoured, that is the hell. He provides evidences from various literary works and other sources to strengthen this point.

The author says that women held high positions and were possessed with rights in all the fields in ancient India. Further he points out that their rights are different

* The author was a popular leader, vetran scholar and writer of Tamilnadu.

from their duties. He condemns the restrictions, humiliation and oppressions on women and the prescription of moral codes only to women.

His analysis on literature and moral texts expose the nature and greatness of women and ascertain that differentiation between both sexes should not be followed. He justifies that liberal and just outlook will form the basis for better life. He provides verses from Sangam literatures, Thirukkural and Barathiar poems throughout the book to strengthen this point. This book is a valuable contribution to the women study. The title of the book itself refers to the pride of women that aspect should be understood by everyone.

12. Tamil Mahalir - Pandum Nerrum : Thayammal Aravanan (Tamil)*,2008

The book contains many essays pertaining to the conditions and life of women in ancient Tamilnadu. It speaks about their talents and capabilities in respect of education and achievements in ancient period to yester years.

The first essay gives the picture of woman drawn from the poetry of Sangam women poets. So the author of the essay sees and presents the facts about women as shown by the Sangam women poets. It says that among 473 poets of Sangam period forty five are women poets. This reference reflects women's capability and excellence in the field of education and shows their skill in the art of poetry. The author presents four facts, drawn from the poetry of women poets, regarding their heroicness, chastity, cross marriage, right of love, remarriage and other qualities. The significant aspect is that in Sangam period, the mixed marriages among different dynasties are found. A the same time no evidence is found for remarriage in Sangam literature, according to the author.

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* She is a retired Professor of Tamil Department, Mother Teresa University, Kodaikanal. She got many awards for her books. Still she is writing on the issues of women. So far nine books on feminism related books, she had written and published.

The Sangam period witnesses the free association of young boy and girl without losing chastity as they have right to love. Another fact is related to the prevalence of Sati in many ways rarely. The other two essays deals with men who lost their wives and women who lost their husbands.

The sorrowful condition of men who departed their wives due to war and business or lost their wives. This occurrences in life is inevitable which should be tolerated. This essay points out that there is evidence for remarriage by both the sexes in Sangam poetry.

The women who lost her husband in war embraced death by various means. A woman killed herself by the spear taken from the death body of her husband. A women died felling on the earth as soon as hearing the death of her husband. A women died embracing the dead body of her husband. Some women followed the custom of Sati. Yet few more women tolerated the life of widowhood in order to carry on their responsibilities to the family.

Then she deals with the concept of women according to Thirukkural. This chapter shows that Thiruvalluvar does not favour treating women as slaves, but favours the equality of women with men. The significant aspect that she pointed out is that Thiruvalluvar does not speak about widowhood, remarriage and polyandry of women.

The author has added the writings of women poets Ananthammal, Sundaram Ammaiar, Manonmani and Kalimuthammai in this book. They describe the sufferings of women. The author says that all these essays on women are presented with new dimension and hopes that these essays will express new views to the researcher.

13. Tamil Ilakkiyamum Penniyamum : Dr.Aranga Mallika, New century Book House Pvt. Ltd, Chennai, (Tamil)*, 2009

The author seeks to evaluate the writings on social status of women based on feminism and focussed her deep attention on the views on women as dedicated in the novels of Jeyakantan and Rajam Krishnan.

The book opens with how far feminism helps to define the needs of women and the existence of women in Literature and Socio Cultural configurations. It deals about the feminism - Liberal feminism, Socialist feminism and Radical feminism. The author presents her deep views on social status of woman, the role of women in family and social struggle.

This book explains the views of Jeyakantan and Rajam Krishnan on women in the light or western and eastern outlook of feminism.

14. Tamilaka Mahaliriyal. (Ed) Dr.Annie Thomas, International Institute of Tamil Studies, Chennai$. 2002

This book is a compilation of twenty four essays, submitted in monthly conferences on 'Tamilaka Mahalir' conducted for twenty fours months jointly by International Institute of Tamil Studies and Mother Teresa Women's University. This consists with introduction by the editor of this book.

As these essays were written by eminent scholars, votaries and supporters of feminism, this remains as a unique contribution to women studies.

These essays reflect the many-sided views on women studies. The first three essays deal with the origin of feminism and its use as motivation companion, the review of feminism and the research methods of women studies.

* The author was a Research fellow of Tamil Department, Mother Teresa Women's University, she got Ph.D. in Tamil Literature. This book is basically her Doctoral Thesis.

$ Dr.Annie Thomas was a professor of faculty of Sociology, Art and Culture, International Institute of Tamil Studies, Chennai.

Then the views and efforts of feminist leaders of Tamilnadu is dealt in the essay titled, 'women's liberation thought and women organisation' in Tamilnadu. Another essay speaks about 'Indian feminism and Dr.Muthulakshmi Reddi'. Another essay focuses on the dedication of heroic women to freedom struggle of India.

The social status of women, higher studies to women, the challenges for nurses in Hospital and Village environment are discussed in three essays few more essays view few Tamil Literary works in the light of feminism. The liberal and progressive views to the progress of women expressed by eminent leaders like Tivanandam, Thiru.V.Ka.Barathiyar, Barathithasan and E.V.R.Perior are presented in separate essays.

This book expresses the effort of a professor and scholar of women studies with a view to promote the women scholars and look for achieving equality of men and women.

15. Penniyam : Varalarum Kotpadukalum, Tamil Translation : Rajanthaman, Vidiyal Pathipagam, Kovai*, 2011.

This is an English book of "Feminism : Theories and History" by Sarah Gamble - Toril moi which had been translated into Tamil by Rajanthaman.

This book presents western theories and concepts on feminism. While describing the history of feminism, it discusses about the development three waves of feminism in historical context. Then it deals with post feminism and explains the two theories of feminism in western countries. One is related to Anglo - American approach and another one is related to French approach.

Then it analyses women writers and writings on women, development of concepts and patriotic society.

This is an ardent effort taken by the author to help those who wish to learn theories of feminism in Tamil.

16. Status of women as Gleaned through the Inscriptions of Pudukottai State : A study, R.Vimala, M.A., (An unpublished Book)*, 2003

This unpublished dissertation seeks to find out the historical background of women in early and medieval Tamilnadu and tries to assess the role of women and their position as gleaned through Pudukottai State Inscriptions.

There are various sources to the history. However to write a history Inscriptions alone are not popularly used although they represent authentic resources. In this way, this study is a valuable contribution to know about the socio-political, economic and religious status of women who lived during the medieval period under Pallava, Pandya and Chola Kings, based on inscriptions of Pudukottai State.

It is an acknowledged fact that books on Indian women, particularly the women of medieval period are not many. There have been many studies on the history. Women of Tamilnadu with a limited focus. Many authors have used inscriptions to find out the history of Tamilnadu. However, through usage of inscriptions to know the position of women of Tamilnadu are very rare. Hence the researcher has made an attempt to use the inscriptions widely to find out the position of women of Tamilnadu as gleaned through the inscriptions.

Conclusion

All the above mentioned books attempt to visualize the problems of women and try to analyse and explore means to solve them. Most of the authors condemn the prevalence of inequality between both the sexes and the adverse attitudes towards women. They also condemn the sexual harassment, suppression and humiliation done to them.

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* R.Vimala, Ph.D., Scholar, Department of Historical Studies and Tourism Management, Mother Teresa Women's University, Research and Extension Centre.

Almost all the writers, although they deal with women of various periods in the history suggest how to resist the problems when they occurred in their life.

Among the suggestions, the necessity of writing on women in a new scale, freedom in deciding the marriage and divorce, Education for women, Rights to women on par with men in all the fields and economic freedom are imperatives for the emancipation of women. Few authors like Bharathiar expects that this is the right time for women to refuse to live like slave and resist to live in situations in which inequality prevails. Most of the writers expect that the readings of these books will make them to think and help them to emerge as a Neoliberal women with new vision which assures the prosperous life to them and strengthens their position.

CHAPTER III

THE TAMIL WOMEN

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The status of women in Tamilnadu through the ages was not at all uniform and it was varying from time to time due to the changing patterns of the society under various political powers. But such distinctions and disparities were not so broad and wide because they were based on the general trend of the state. Though much stress is assigned to women empowerment today mainly to enrich their economic status and the women are offered many rights and privileges constitutionally and legally, the condition of women was not so during the pre independent period. This chapter gives a complete picture on the status of Tamil women of ancient Sangam Period to present century.

During the ancient period, the Tamil society had not granted any legal or social equality on par with men. They had to lead a dependent life. Before the marriage they depended upon their father or brothers and after marriage they were the dependants of the husband or sons. The duties of women in the Tamil society were having its own political, social and economic variations. The women were generally confined to household duties and they had no place in political activities and economic pursuits. Due to economic consideration at times they served as slaves and servant maids. As the basic qualities and attitudes were not equal to those of men, the women were not at all allowed to aspire for equal status on par with men. But during the **Śaṅgam** age, as the social condition was totally different from that of today, the women were generally venerated and their social status was not at all in a worse position.[1] The masculine traits were the determinants of adjudging the noticeable difference between men and women.[2] The treatment of women known for their "love, shyness and implicit acceptance and retention of elderly advice without question", were the ideal feminine

[1] N. Subrabmanian, **Sangam Polity,** Ennes Publication, Madurai, 1980, p.298.
[2] **Tolkappiyam, Porul,** 98.

traits.[3] But this was not the case with the Queens of the rulers of the different dynasties. By being the queen and wife of the ruler, due to their political status, they were highly venerated and they enjoyed certain social rights and previleges and it had become a tradition and custom of the Tamils to stress on the virtue called chastity and they were confined only with the house.[4] The woman, who played a subordinated role to man was not fit for offering any advices to others and they had to refrain from offering any judgment on anything. Being a housewife she was expected to be an ideal lady to be in compromise with all.[5] All these facts are mostly based on literary sources. As these are facts pertaining to the early Tamil society of the pre Pallava period it becomes a must to have the facts based on inscriptions belonging to the periods of Greater Pallavas, the Pandyas of first Pandyan empire, second Pandyan empire, the Imperial Cholas and the later Cholas. The inscriptions of the Vijayanagar and Nayak periods also will form the basis for the study and they will expose the actual condition of the women at all levels.

As the Tamil society was a patriarchal one and enjoyed patrilineal succession to property was approved, the family was a male dominating one and the women were given only a secondary position. Further as the men were the bread winners for the family they became the overlords of the family and as heads of the family the others were subordinated to him. The women, who were biologically handicapped had no right to public office and had no right to inherit property at that time.[6] In this regard it should also be noticed that the status or position of women was a debased and an impaired one mainly due to their incapacity to interrogate the social taboos.[7] While the women met with a dismal picture mainly when they were abstained from economic concerns of any nature their economic as well as social status were below appreciation.

[3] **Ibid,** 99.
[4] **Kuruntogai,** 139.
[5] **Purananuru,** 83 and 86.
[6] N. Subramanian, **History of Tamilnadu** to A.D. 1336. Koodal Publishers, Madurai, 1976, pp.371-373.
[7] Kumkum Ray (ed.) **Women in Early Indian Societies,** Manohar Publications, New Delhi, 1999, p.30.

But in the 21st century when they had empowered themselves by their economic involvements the position of women has become an appreciable and enviable one. Their positions in the urban and rural areas are augmented. From the commencement of the modern period the value of women and estimate had met with drastic changes. The congenial and conducive matrimonial laws and traditions were supportive only to men during the earlier periods. The women also served a tool to subside the sexual thirst of men.[8] At present the women engage themselves in multifarious occupations, professions due to their attainment of higher level of education and also due to the constitutional provisions. So many legislations have also come up to place them at a higher pedestal. That in turn offered an enhanced status to them when compared their status with those of the earlier one.

Status of Tamil Women : from Śangam to recent years

By an estimate of the status of women of the **Śangam** age through the **Śangam** classics, one can possibly have a comparative study of the position of the Tamil women of the subsequent periods on the basis of epigraphic of inscriptional evidences. So an analysis could be endeavoured on that line. There were eminent poetesses such as Nappasalayār,[9] Nachchellayār,[10] Elaveyini,[11] Kākkaipādiniyār.[12] These facts indicate their affluent status due to their wisdom and knowledge in producing Tamil poems. At the same time the Tamil women were expected to be inside the house and those went beyond the door steps of the house were known as **Kadaikāli magalir** [13] and they were not given any recognition in the society. The peasant women who belonged to the lowest class were called **Kadaisiyar**[14] The **Eyirriyar** were also women who were engaged in smothering the soil and weeding

[8] A.S. Altekar, **The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization,** Motilal Banarsidas, New Delhi, 1987 p.95.
[9] **Ahananuru,** 130, **Narrinai,** 304, **Purananuru,** 126,174,226,280 etc.
[10] **Kurumtogai,** 210, **Purananuru,** 278.
[11] **Purananuru,** 11,62,356,359,369,370,371.
[12] **Kurntogai,** 210, **Purananuru,** 278.
[13] **Cilappatikaram,** XIV:71.
[14] **Purananuru,** 61:1, **Cilappatikaram,** X:130.

in the plough fields.[15] **Ulathiyar,** the womenfolk of **ulavar** i.e., farmers were also engaged in agricultural activities as planters of seedlings and weeders.[16] This practice of employing women in paddy fields continued to exist even during the days of **Pēriya Purānam** and they were known as **ulathiyar.**[17] While the women were engaged in such low level economic activities they were experts in fine arts also. For instance **Mādhavi** of **Silappatikāram** was an expert in dance who had obtained the title called **Talaikoli.** The dancing girl was generally called **Talaikkōl Arivai.**[18] The chief singers during dance were also women and they were given the name **Talaippattukkūthi.**[19] The women were engaged for dehusking and winnowing while cleaning paddy.[20] The women who were undertaking the act of pounding paddy for the removal of the husk from the grains were involved in a specific kind of song called **Vallaippāttu.**[21] At the same time there were washer women known as **pulattiyar.**[22] The women were also engaged as wards for protecting the ripened yields in the agricultural fields.[23] When these things indicate that the women of the **Śangam** age were engaged in various low level activities based on economic pursuits, they were even venerated for their economic standards. For instance the mother of Kovalan, the hero of **Śilappatikāram** was bearing the name **Perumanaikkilathi.** That is an indication of the prestigious status assigned to women. The calling of the wife of **Pāndyan Āriyappadai Kadantha Neduñcheliyan** as **Perunkōppendu** will attest it because she was the mistress of a renowned ruler and the chief queen of the renowned ruler.[24] While **Āriyapadai Kadantha Neduñcheliyan's** wife also was called **Kōppērundevi**, the queen of Bhuda Pāndyan, who predeceased her husband was

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[15] **Perumbanarruppadai,** 94, **Cilappatikaram,** XII:140, **Cirupanchamulam,** 175.
[16] **Tolkappiyam, Porul,** 20.
[17] **Periyapuranam,** 5:22-24.
[18] **Cilappatikaram,** XIV;154.
[19] **Ibid.,** XIV:156.
[20] **Cirupanarruppadai,** 190.
[21] **Malaipadukadam,** 342, **Kuruntogai,** 89:1, **Kalittogai,** 41:40.
[22] **Ahananuru,**34:11, 387:6, **Kuruntogai,** 330:1, **Purananuru,** 259:5.
[23] **Kalittogai** 4:2:9, **Kuruntogai,** 89:1.
[24] **Cilappatikaram,** XXV:86.

also called by such name.[25] The queen of the Chera ruler Cheraman **Kottambalathu Tuñjiya Makkōdai** was also hailed and venerated as **Perunkōppendu.**[26] She was also called as **Kāvalan Dēvi** in **Manimēgalai**. Such facts stand to prove the prevalence of the distinctive and prestigeous positions of the womenfolk during that period. The calling of the elderly ladies of the martial family as **pērirpendu**[27] will attest the above fact. Such facts prove that the women of those days were given reverence and respect due to their family position. It should also be noted here that the women were maintaining specific traditions as stipulated by the society. For instance girls were accustomed to take bath with their mothers during the Tamil month **Tai** and this customary practice was called **Amba Ādal.**[28] The dancing woman who used to dance on the rope according to the tune played by the musical instrument was named as **ādumahal.**[29] It is yet another aspect pertaining to women and that too speaks for their status. The **Āychchiyar** i.e., cowherdesses[30] and **Āy Mahalir** that also refers to cowherdess, were also recognized due to their specific kind of dance called **Āychchiyar Kuravai**. The calling of Madhari, an elderly cowherd as **Āyar Mudumahal** too will testify to the venerable position rendered to the elderly women.[31] Anyhow it is worth to note that during the **Śangam** age, the calling of women as **Kadaisiyar**[32] and **Kadaikali magalir**[33] will clearly indicate that the women, who were prevented from enjoying any property rights, did not have any appreciable and important role to play in the society as it is to-day.

The women, being the mistress of the house, were venerated as **Illaval**[34] and **Illal.**[35] The importance assigned to the husband and father while referring to the wife

[25] **Purananuru,** 246.
[26] **Ibid.,** 245.
[27] **Ibid.,** 270:6.
[28] **Paripadal,** 11:81.
[29] **Narrinai,**95:2, **Purananuru,** 128:6.
[30] **Kalittogai,**106:32, **Silappatikaram,** XVII.
[31] **Silappatikaram,** XVIII:2, 132
[32] **Purananuru,** 61:1 and **Silappatikaram,** X:130.
[33] **Silappatikaram,** XIV:71.
[34] **Thirukkural,** 6:53.
[35] **Ibid.,** 6:52.

and daughter too explicate the enhanced status of men. For instance the wife of the Chola queen of this period was called **Rājamādevi**[36] and the daughter of **Ilankōvēl** was called as **Ilankōvenmāl.**[37] The terms **Pēymahal Ilavēyini,** the author of **Puranānūru** song number 11 and **Kuramagal Ilavēyini**, the poetess and author of the **Purānanūru** song Nos 207 and 237 will also attest the above facts.

As the Tamils of that period were known for their fascination and attachment to the different kinds of arts, the Tamils of that period even unhesitatingly called the Goddess Durgha as **Kalai Pāvai** and goddess of victory.[38] This too will reveal the position of women which was having variations and disparities. The women were hailed and venerated as goddesses and queens. But the social status of common women was not at all an appreciable one. The then Tamils were fond of calling their women of different communities by the name of the community to which they belonged to. The terms **Kurathi,**[39] **Kuramagal,**[40] **Kurappinakkodi**,[41] etc., also will attest the above facts. It is worth to compare such names with the terms **Eyirriyar, Ulathiyar** etc., available in different **śangam** classics.

The **Ādal Kuthiyārs** were courtesans who were actresses and danced according to the sounds produced by the beat of the drums.[42] The dancing girls were also known as **Viraliyar** who had long tresses of hair.[43] Such facts indicate that the Tamils were capable of clubbing fine arts and beautification with the use of women who were experts in those traits. The calling of the hunter women as **Kōdichchi**[44] too will reveal that the Tamils associated the women with the professions or the occupations of their husbands.

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[36] **Manimegalai,** XXIII, **Silappatikaram,** XXI:76.
[37] **Silappatikaram,** XXV:5.
[38] **Ibid.,** XII:16, XXIII:125.
[39] **Purananuru,** 108:1, **Cilappatikaram,** XXVII:224.
[40] **Ahananuru,** 52:3, **Narrinai,** 357.
[41] **Paripadal,** 19:95.
[42] **Manimegalai,** XII:51, **Naladiyar,** 191:3, **Cilappatikaram,** V:50.
[43] **Padirruppathu,** 18:6.
[44] **Ahananuru,** 58:5, **Narrinai,** 85:9, 95:8, 134:4, 204:11, etc.

Due to the involvement of women in various economic pursuits and activities they were even taken as war captives by the victors in the name called **kondi mahalir**.[45] The repeated occurrences of the term **kodiyar**[46] too will expose that there were women who were engaged in specific profession such as playing the bent or horned musical instrument. The terms **śiladhiyār**[47] and **silvalai virali**[48] too inform that there were slave girls and even the wandering female bard were accustomed to wear bangles. Such facts indicate that the women were playing their role in different capacities and they never involve in pointing out their social status.

As the **Śangam** age was the golden age and Augustan age of Tamil literature, it attached greater veneration for wisdom and knowledge. Even in that respect they considered Durgha as the torch of knowledge i.e., **Gnanakōlundu.**[49] Further only on economic considerations Tirumal as otherwise Vishnu is hailed as **Tiruvin Kanavan**[50] and his wife Lakshmi is treated as **Tiruvin Cēyyōl.**[51] Though the Tamils did not offer any property rights to women, the womenfolk of the lower rank in the society were engaged in different kinds of works to earn their livelihood. Due to the religious faith and belief the Tamils hailed women to be in a trance under the influence of divinity. Hence she was called as **dēiva murraval.**[52] While Kannagi is attributed to such qualities she is associated with Durgha who was also called **Tentamil Pāvai.**[53]

As seen earlier as the Tamils attached greater veneration for fine arts and associated with them, they even respected elderly dancing women who retired from their profession. The terms such as **Tōriya Mahalir** and **Tōriya Madanthai** too will attest this fact.[54] So it is obvious that the women, who were known for their artistic

[45] **Pattinappalai,** 246.
[46] **Ahananuru;** 111:9, 301:23, **Kuruntogai,** 78:2, **Malaipadukadam,** 236, **Narrinai,** 212:3, **Pattinappalai,** 253, **Porunararruppadai,** 57, **Purananuru,** 29:23, 368:16, **Cirupanarruppadai,** 109, 125.
[47] **Silappatikaram,** V:51, XIV:132, XVI:138.
[48] **Padirruppathu,** VI:7.
[49] **Silappatikaram,** XII:103.
[50] **Paripadal,** 3:90.
[51] **Cilappatikaram,** VI:61.
[52] **Ibid.,** XIX:26.
[53] **Ibid.,** XII:48.
[54] **Ibid.,** VI:19.

skill, were enjoying a venerable position in the society. In the same way it should be borne in mind that Nannahaiyar was a poetess of Kachchipedu, who wrote the **Kuruntōgai** songs 30, 118, 172,180,192,197,287 and 325.[55] She was also hailed the repeated occupancies of the terms **nataga kanigai, nātaga mahalir, nātaga madanthai** too will explain the relationship between the fine arts and women. In the same way the term **nulaimakal,** meaning the girl of the fisherman community, too refers to the importance assigned to the women of different community.[56] So it is evident that the women of different communities were called by their community name.

As the Tamils assigned significance to chastity, a noble prerequisite for women, the chaste women were highly venerated. Kannagi, the heroine of **Silappatikāram** is hailed as **padnri kadavul,** the goddess of chastity.[57] The goddess of chastity had even a temple called **pathinikkottam.**[58] The chaste ladies ordered to be left unseathed by fire.[59] The women of chastity thus attained a venerable position in the society.

The women were associated with many occupations and professions. The term **paruthippēndu** suggests that there were women who spun cotton at the spinning wheel.[60] Those women who were undertaking singing as a profession were called as **pādini** or **pānichchi.** The availability of such descriptions in various Tamil works of the **Śangam** age informs that the Tamil women were engaged in different professions due to their own personal traits and calibre.[61] The Tamils attached women with **panar** and they were called **pān magal.**[62] In the same way the Brahmin ladies, who donned the mullai flowers as their tufts were known as **pārppana magalir.**[63]

[55] N. Subrahmanian, **Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index,** University of Madras, Madras, 1966, p.485.
[56] **Cirupanarruppadai,** 158.
[57] **Silappatikaram,** XXV:114, **Manimegalai,** XXVI:10.
[58] **Silappatikaram,** XXX:131.
[59] **Ibid.,** XXI:3.
[60] **Purananuru,** 326:5.
[61] **Padrirruppathu,** 14:17, 17:14, 61:16, 8:7:1, **Paripadal,** 17:17, **Porunararruppadai** 47,72, **Purananuru,** 11:18, 15:24, 242:3, **Tolkappiyam:Porul,** 193:2.
[62] **Ahananuru,** 126:9, 216:1, **Aingurunuru.**
[63] **Narrinai,** 32:1:4.

Woman, called by the name **pina,**[64] were also, as seen earlier, engaged in many professions and in that sense **pulathi** was the name used to indicate washer women.[65] The term **pulathi** too indicates the same thing.[66] Such facts stand to prove that the Tamil society of the **śangam** age offered a specific place for the women.

The following female advice and guidance by man was treated as a sin[67] and this will prove that women were given only an inferior position to men and their words were not recognised. Though the women are generally placed secondary to men, there are references to know that there were women poestesses, in the name of **pēy pendir** and **pēy mahalir.**[68] In the form of depicting a customary practice, the girls who played the game of building the houses were known as **pōidal mahalir.**[69] The women were known for their wisdom and knowledge. **Ponmaniyar,** the poetess who authored **Kuruntogai** and Ponmudiyar, the poetess and author of **Puranānuru** songs 299, 310, 312 will attest the respect entrusted to the women known for their wisdom, knowledge and calibre. In this respect alone **Śarasvathi**, the goddess of learning is hailed as **Munnōr mudalvi**[70] **Kalai kadavul.**

Okkur Masattiyar, due to her wide horizon of knowledge was the author of the **Ahañanuru** songs 324 and 384; **Kuruntogai,** 126,139,186,220,275 and **Purañañuru,** 279. The venerable nature of the women was mainly because of their wisdom and knowledge and due to that they were able to serve as poetesses. The enhanced status of the Tamil women was even due to their efficiency in executing dance and music. So that even **Māyaval** i.e., Durgha was associated with the **marakkāl** dance to destroy the **Asurās.** Further to maintain the superiority of goddess Durgha she was treated as **Malavarkilankilai** or sister of Tirumal.[71] The calling of

[64] **Tolkappiyam, Porul**:616:1.
[65] **Narrinai**:90:3.
[66] **Ahananuru,** 34:11, **Kuruntogai,** 330:1, **Pruananuru**; 259:3.
[67] **Thirukkural,** 91, (Chapter Heading)
[68] **Purananuru,** 11:62.
[69] **Paripadal,** 20:59.
[70] **Paripedal,** 20:59.
[71] **Silappatikaram,** XII:68.

the temple of Champapati as **Mudhiyal Kōttam** or **Mudhiyolkōttam**[72] too will reveal the veneration assigned by the Tamils to the goddess by placing them in a separate temple.

While admiring the women of education and wisdom and goddesses, the Tamils were capable of classifying women as **mudirpendir** the women folk of the warrior clan. They were even the women cooks in the palace and their duty was to offer regular sacrifices to the **bhudam** along with the execution of the regular culinary activities.[73]

Wife, the partner in life, was called **valkkai thunai.**[74] The terms such as **varaiyara mahalir**[75] (damsels of divine nature residing on hills) **varaivin mahalir**[76] (women without marriage) **vanava mahalir**[77] (divine damsels), **vanavan mahal**[78] (Devayani, the daughter of Indira) will suggest that the Tamils of the **Śangam** period were particular in giving importance to women belonging to different categories. By using words of appreciable nature to denote women, the Tamils even called women, who functioned as **dēvadasis** as **vānavan mahalir.**[79] Sarasvathi, the goddess of learning was called **Vānōr Talaivi.**[80] So it is obvious that the Tamils had their own esteem for the women of different calibre. The hailing of the harlots as **vilai(nalap)pendir**[81] too will attest the fact. The veneration assigned to the wisdom and knowledge of women compelled the Tamils even to hail the poetic qualities of a potter woman called **Vennikkuyathiyār** who was the author of the **Puram** song No.66. The women were fond of wearing many varieties of bangles and the girls who were wearing conch bracelets were called **venkaimahalir.**

[72] **Manimegalai,** XVII:88, XVIII:169, XIX:39, XXII:3, etc.
[73] **Silappatikaram,** V:75; **Purananuru,** 19:15, 279:2.
[74] **Tirukkural,** 6:51
[75] **Ahananuru,** 342:12, **Kurinjippattu,** 195.
[76] **Tirukkural,** Heading of chapter 92.
[77] **Silappatikaram,** XXVII:26.
[78] **Paripadal,** 9:38.
[79] **Cilappatikaram,** III:4.
[80] **Manimegalai,** XVI:19.
[81] **Purananuru,** 365:8.

Thus the position of the Tamil women during the **Śangam** age was a renowned and venerable one and they were dutiful and sincere in managing the family. Exceptionally there were women scholars and poetesses and they were appreciated. A normal type of woman led a full moral and purposive life of love, devotion and service all round her.[82] Groups of courtesans played a prominent role in the society.[83]

The conditions of widows were miserable and they were forbidden of the extravagance of the world and they had to lead a secluded life without participating in any of the ceremonies which held in the family. As pointed out by **Puranānūru** song No.62 during the **Śangam** age and even during the Chola period the widow of the soldier who lost his life in the battle field had to give up chewing betel and should take bath only in cold water.[84]

The willing and unquestioning subordination of women to men continued to survive even during the medieval period. The women, who had right over the property, they had to be amenable to monotheism. The **Dēvadāsi** system, which was a prominent institution, due to their wealth and prosperity enabled women to announce grants and charitable endowments.[85]

During the Nayak period the status of women was an underestimated one[86]. She could not oppose men and the male dominated society due to the conservative attitude and outlook.

Since women's role is significant in the social history, due stress is provided to promote their status. The women are viewed as passive receptacle, with their status or position changing to reflect the state of the world around them[87]. Anyhow, but for the efforts taken to enhance the positon of women during the modern days,

[82] N. Subrahmanian, **Op.cit,** p.302.
[83] **Journal of Indian History,** Vol. XXXVIII, part III, December, 1960.
[84] K.A. Nilaknta Sastri, **Colas,** University of Madras, Madras, 1955, p.75.
[85] **South Indian Inscriptions** Vol.XIV, No.18.
[86] **Women's Link**: Vol. IV, July September, 1994, p. 20
[87] Kumkum Roy, (ed.), **Op.cit.**, p. 3

even the women of the medieval Tamilnadu gained some recognitions due to their attachment to the temples as **dēvaradiyārs** as seen earlier.

While such facts expose the status of women associated with the temple as par with their services the women too were allowed to maintain the temple. From the above facts it is evident that during the medieval period the women attached to the temples had a social status. While the other women folk of the society were leading a life without any rights and previleges, the British rule as seen earlier took certain measures to elevate their position through legal measures. Subsequently, in the post independent period, the Government of India devoted to empower women by offering opportunities in various fields such as education, economy, occupation etc.

It is evident that while women's labour is tapped for agricultural and other activities they had little or no control over the production generated activities[88]. They were confined only to household activities at all times. But women once enjoyed freedom and privileges in the family and religion began to witness drastic changes in the succeeding periods due to the transitions in political, social and economic spheres. Anyhow during the advent of the Europeans, in the 18th century certain welfare measures were undertaken to improve the condition of women. Historically speaking religion and social practices compounded to designate women as **griha lakshmi,** the prosperity of the household. Gradually steps were taken to transform womenhood. The life of women as human beings in the context of their actual lives, aspirations, expectations compelled the social reformers to change the self effacing, submissive and inferior role of women today. Though feminism, with its western connotation was largely suspected in India.

Women's issues, development programmes gained acceptance during the late 19th century due to the Indian Renaissance. The Socio-religious reform movements of the 19th century of India, for gaining a status for India, were the

[88] Kumkum Roy, **op.cit**, p. 18

consequences of Westernisation with the religious and social tinge. In the field of religion, steps were taken to combat superstitions of multifaceted nature and in the social sphere the women movements of India aimed at the eradication of social evils like infanticide, child marriage, seclusion of widows and disparities infused on the basis of centre and castes.

During the British rule in India the status of women was low in the feudal and rigid family caste ridden frame work. Further during the colonial rule the ruling authorities indirectlly created an atmosphere based on the western principles which they brought out and also on the ideas proposed by Indian Social Reformers such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Iswar Chander Vidyhasagar. Such things formed the background to the passage of the above acts in Independent India.

In 1829 itself **Śati**, the horrible act of self immolation was made illegal[89]. While that act was a protective measure, the widohood was a most horrible one. So to avoid the seclusion of women from societies and social taboos the **Widow Remarriages Act** was passed in 1856 itself[90]. Thus after the removal of the horror of **Sati** by law in 1829[91], the secluded life of the widows was prevented by **The Widow Remarriage Act of 1856(FN.166).**

In the meanwhile few women's organisations emerged. Sarvodevi Chaudarani's **Bharat Stree Mandal** stood for promoting women's education. In 1917 at Madras **The Women's Indian Association** was formed by Margret Cousins and Annie Besant. To have marriage reforms and women's rights the **All India Women's Conference** came into being. The **Bangiya Nari Samaj of Bengal** stressed women's voting rights. In Tamilnadu Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy (1886 -1968) by establishing the **Avvai Home** for the destitute women demanded for adult franchise and concentrated on the promotion of girl's education. Though a Doctor by Profession

[89] Janaki Nair, **Women and Law in Colonial India**, Bangalore, 1995, p.181
[90] **Ibid.**
[91] **Ibid.**

in 1926 she became a member of the Madras Legislative Council and was appointed as its Vice President. She also served as the President of **The All India Women's Association**[92]. Her efforts met with a great deal of improvement of the condition and status of women. Miss Amy Carmichael's (1867 - 1951) effort was responsible for passing an Act in 1947 which made the dedication of girls to temples, illegal[93]. Thus the position was treated as a keystone of a society and her progress was felt as the real progress of a nation[94]. Though the positon and status of Indian women was not an appreciable one though the ages either in law, or in public or in social life it is obvious that during the post independent period they have made good politically and in other walks of human activity. Legislations also have been passed in the Indian Parliament to achieve a status legally[95]. As such it is warranted to have the various legislations which emerged during the colonial and post independent periods in India for having an estimate of the facilities offered to them for enhancing their social, political, economic and cultural empowerment.

While the Tamil society was a male dominated one with patriarchal character there prevailed no equality between men and women. But the burning issue of feminism while gained momentum in the 20th century compelled to contemplate on their development by avoiding the disparity, significant due to sexual variations.[96] Such diverting measures also have their own impacts over the Tamil women.[97] The gradual disappearance of the conservative attitude and outlook about women is having the legal support.[98] During the rule of the East India Company, many laws were promulgated to favour the uplift and empowerment of the women since there emerged the necessity to undertake legal steps to eliminate such authorities[99]. It

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[92] A. Devanesan, **History of Tamilnadu (Upto 2000 A.D)**, Renu Publications, Marthandam, 2004, p. 387
[93] **Ibid**, p. 391
[94] Padmahai Sanjva Rao, **Women's Views on Indian Problems**, Women's Indian Association , Madras, 1961, p. 4
[95] Tara Ali Baig, **Women of India**, Publications Divisions, Government of India, New Delhi, 1958, p. VII
[96] Annie Thomas (Ed.) **Tamilaga Mahalir Iyal**, Indian Institute of Tamil Studies, Chennai, 2002, p.2.
[97] **Women's link**, Vol.IV, July-September, 1994, p.20.
[98] **Women's Concerns**, January-June 1996, p.26.
[99] **Women's Concerns**, January June 1996, p. 26

became crystal clear that there was a belief that by offering more rights to the weaker sex they can be placed in the path of progress and development with self confidence[100]. Sections 16(1), 16(2) and 51(C) of the Indian constitution contain details about the status of women. While the above conditions are to be studied it will also be apt and appropriate to have a analysis of women during the colonial period.

Under such a pretext to settle the issues in 1941, the **B.N.Rau Commission** was constituted. Subsequently in 1944, the **Indian Law Commission** was established. These Commissions pinpointed the need to ensure transitions and transformations in the life of women. On that line the laws pertaining to women, passed during 1949, 1955, 1956, 1960, 1964, 1976 and 1978 attempted to enhance and elevate the position of women. Such acts inculcated an idea that the implementation of economic developmental activities would elevate their status[101]. The different laws which were enunciated in the post independent period were mostly social laws for improving their economy[102]. The spcial marriage Act of 1872. **The Hindu Marriage Act of 1954** served as a basis for making the women to understand that the acts relating to marriages would yield economic prosperity and stability to them[103]. **The Hindu Succession Act of 1956,** stands as supportive elements of the avoidance of all the elements which impede the uplift of women.[104] In addition to the above the acts passed subsequently in the years 1964, 1976, 1978 also prompted the progress of the women and achievement of a stabilized position in the society.[105]

The property and succession acts were the foundations for their promoted economic services. The presents, donations and the cash presentations received by the girl at the time of her marriage widened the scope to claim her property right

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[100] Tiru.V. Kalyanasundaranar, **Pennin Perumai**, Poomagal Publishers, Chennai, 1992, p. 33
[101] Sasi Jain, **Status and Role Participation of Middle Class Women**, New Delhi, 1988, p. 11
[102] **Encyclopaedia of Social Work in India**, Vol. II, p. 254
[103] Padmini Sengupta, **The History of Women of India**, New Delhi, 1974, p. 234
[104] **Women's Link,** Vol.II, No.13, April-June, 1993, p.27.
[105] Sasi Jain, **Status and Role participation of Middle class women,** New Delhi, 1958, p.11.

over them[106].Dowry offered either in the form of cash or kind was also a great problem which hindered the status and position of women[107]. Since dowry caused great havoc to the life of women, in 1961 **The Dowry Prohibition Act** was passed[108] and that made either receipt or payment of dowry was declared illegal and treated as a finable crime. The **Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961** had intensified the relief measures of the uplift of women. By including various aspects pertaining to dowry as a modification in 1984 **The Dowry Prohibition Amendment Act** was passed. Subsequently in 1985 amendments were made to **The Dowry Prohibition Act** and that introduced additions to explain the facts about punishments. But due to ignorance of legal implications still abstructions prevail regarding the proper enactment of the fact. As these acts could not solve the problems and issues of women, their sufferings and distresses continue to survive. The idea that the property of women should go to her and it began to take deep roots during the second half of the 20th century Such legislations widened the scope in promoting the status of women of all levels.

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[106] Pramadhi Mukerjee, **Hindu Women**, New Delhi, 1978, pp. 75-76
[107] Vijay Singh, **Dowry Prohibition in India**, Jhanshi, 1985, p.19
[108] Notification No S.J.1410, Gazette of India, (Extraordinary) Part II, Section, III, dated 20, June 1961, p. 1005

CHAPTER IV

WOMEN AND POLITICS

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The position and functions of women in politics are defined by the nature of the state and political system that prevailed in those periods. This requires an analysis of the state and political system of that period and an understanding of the role of women in that context.

In this chapter, an attempt has been made to highlight the status and position of women in politics as gleaned from the Inscriptions of the research period which covers Pallavas, Pandyas and Cholās to Vijayanagar and Nayaka regimes in Tamilnadu.

4.1 STATE AND POLITICAL SYSTEM

Whether the state under the Paṇdiyas, Cholas, Pallavas to Nayaga regine kings represents centralized or village Republics, or segmentary power pockets? Because these forms are found in the structure of the state of these periods. After Śaṅgam and Kalabhra periods, the forth coming period, from 4th or 5th to 18th century A.D. is marked with change and transition in the political, socio-economic configuration.

Burton Stein, an American Indologist, put the state system of this period into an alternative frame work of the segmentary state model. He says that 'South Indian States from Pallava times to Vijayanagar show the characteristics of the segmentary state.[1] This indicates the existence of more power pockets within the centralized state system. Burton rejects the image of centralized state applied to the kingdoms of these periods. He also rejects Nilakanta Sastri's view of Chola Kingdom as 'Byzantine model of centralized state'[2].

1. Noboru Karashima, ***South Indian Society in Transition***, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, P.2.; Burton Stein, Peasant and Society in Midieval South India, New Delhi : Oxford University Press, 1980, p.274
2. K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, ***The Cholas***, University of Madras, Madras, 1955, p.447; Burton Stein, Peasant State and Society in Midieval South India, p.256.

However, Burton's segment state received many criticism from Indian Scholars.[3] Yet it 'had a strong impact on the study of South Indian History by urging us to give more attention to the theoretical analysis of the state and society.[4]

Besides these theoretical study, there is a parallel but constructive type of study going on, which examines inscriptional material in detail for the elucidation of political, religious and social milieu of ancient, medieval and later South Indian States. However some of the scholars including R.Champakalakshmi, P.Shanmugam and James Heitzman have been trying to combine these two types of study-theoretical construction and factual examination in their work on ancient and medieval South Indian History with the help of epigraphical data.

The state system consists with local self government or village republics or nādus*. Monarchy was the most common form of Government, from ancient Sangham to later periods in the Tamil country, although the other form of Government such as republic was known to them.

This was the state, political and social formation, prevailed during the 3rd to 18th centuries A.D. in the Tamil country.

After the removal and extirpation of the Kalabhra rule from Tamilnadu after the sixth century A.D. the Greater Pallavas, the rulers of the first Pandyan empire, the Imperial Cholas, the Pandyas of the second Pandyan Empire, the later Cholas, the Vijayanagar rulers and the Nayaks ruled the different parts of Tamilnadu during the subsequent periods. Almost all the rulers of the above dynasties maintained their prestige by their dedicated welfare and other services to the contemporary society.

3. R.S.Sharma, '***The Segmentary state and the Indian Experience***', Indian Historical Review, vol.XVI Nos 1-2, 1889/90 pp.80-108. This reflects the criticism by Indian scholars.
4. Noboru Karashima, ***South Indian Society in Transition***, Ancient to Medieval, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, p.56

* Nādu was a small topographical unit of area for reproduction in the ancient and Midieval Tamil country comprising five to ten villages. Y.Subbarayalu, Political, Geography of the Chola country, Madras : Tamilnadu State Department of Archaeology, 1973, p.19-49.

Though much had been brought to light by eminent historians of Tamilnadu no endeavour has been hitherto made to highlight the status and position of women as gleaned from the inscriptions belonging to the above mentioned different rulers of differernt rules in Tamilnadu. In this regard the analysis of the position of the Tamil women in politics should commence with the early **Brāhmī** inscriptions of the period between 2nd century B.C and 1st century A.D. Though various inscriptions devote to the revelation of the grants issued by the women belonging to royal families and others it will be apt to have an estimate of the position of women in politics as available in the inscriptions. As the **Brāhmī** inscriptions are the earliest inscriptions available in Tamilnadu, datable from third century B.C to third century A.D. one should analyse the position of women on that line.

4.2 MARRIAGES OF THE KINGS

It seems that the marriage with restricted codes was not vogue in the beginning. The same was common to all the majority societies. Śangam Literatures had recorded the free association of love before marriage. Generally marriage defines the relationship between husband and wife. Such an arrangements, are restricted with sexual moral codes. The laws regarding this determine monogamy and polygamy[5].

A.L.Basham, professor of Asian civilization, Australian university, Canberra. says "The ordinary people of India, as of every other part of the world, were generally monogamous, though even in the time of the Rig veda polygamy was not unknown. Kings and chiefs were almost invariably polygamous, as were many Brahmans and wealthier members of the lower orders".[6] In ordinary circumstances polygamy was not encouraged by the earlier legal literature.

5. Dr.R.Rajalakshmi, Tamilaga Mahalir, (Tamil) Santhiya Pathipagam, Chennai, p.52-53.

6. A.L.Basham, The wonder that was India, PICADOR, 2004, p.174. Dharma Sutra opposes polygamy. However, polygamous marriages are so frequently mentioned that we may assume that they were fairly common among all sections. Grief of the wife whose husband has married another woman and of one convicted by witnesses in court of the community who could afford them. Polygamous households were not necessarily unhappy. However several of the courtly dramas deal with the jealousy of the King's senior wife towards the latest object of her lord's affections. The first wife must console herself. The first wife often felt bitterly the happiness of her rival.

The kings adopted the tradition of taking women and princesses as war captives that led to the tradition of polygamy. Also to have a diplomatic relationship the rulers have married either daughter or the sisters of other country rulers and there prevailed polygamy. As it was a custom among the Chola rulers to adopt polygamy, Parantaka I (907-955 A.D.) was not an exception. He had many wives. Chera princess Kokkilanadigal was his Chief queen.[7] He had married the daughter of Paluvettarāyan of Paluvur,[8] Arumoli Nangai,[9] Villavan Madevi,[10] Tribhuvana Madevi,[11] Vanavan Madevi,[12] Chōlasigamani,[13] Chōla Madevi[14] and Tennavan Madevi.[15] Such facts indicate that the rulers were adopting the policy of polygamy mainly to maintain diplomatic contacts and that in turn attests the status of women which prevailed among the royal families. Though no much details are available about them, among the two daughters of Parantaka I, Vīra Madevi, had married Govinda IV, the Rashtrakuta ruler. It will testify to the diplomatic relations maintained by the Chola monarch with other rulers through matrimonial alliances.(FN.30)

It was a customary practice among the Chola rulers to marry **Dēvaradiyār*** and to enhance their social status. For instance Panchavan Madevi, one of the queens of Rāja Rāja, the Great was the daughter of Thirllaiyalagi, a prostitute.[16] In the same way Anukkiyar Paravai, wife of Rajendra, the great was a prostitute.

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[7] **S.I.I.** Vol, II, No.76.
[8] **Epigraphia Indica,** Vol.XV. No.5
[9] S.I.I. Vol.VII 520.
[10] **Ibid.,** Vol.III, No.110.
[11] 130 of 1931
[12] **S.I.I.** Vol V, No.547.
[13] **Ibid.,** No.525.
[14] **Ibid.,** No.524.
[15] **Ibid.,** No.601.
[16] S.I.I. Vol.V. No.644, Vol.VI, No.33. Ref.Roles and Rituals for Hindu women, (Ed) Julia Leslie : Regarding the validation of the Devadasi, with the marriage, the female power of Devadasi become merged with the God's Sakthi... Davadasis were God-fearing.
* maid servant attached to temple.

4.3 MATRIMONIAL ALLIANCES

Arinjaya (956-957 A.D.), the brother of Gandarādhitha[17] too had four wives called Kundavai, Kothai Pirātty, Kalyani and Bhudhi Aditha Pidari. Among them Kundavai was the daughter of Viman II, the Eastern Chalukya ruler.[18] While Adhithan Kothai Piratty was the daughter of a Chera ruler and Kalyani was the daughter of the Vaidumbaraya ruler.[19] Bhudhi Aditha Pidari was the daughter of the Kodumbalur chieftain called Tennavan Elangovel.[20] Such facts reveal that the Chola rulers, as a diplomatic measure, to maintain their prestige had matrimonial alliances with the other rulers of different areas. So at the political level the women were utilized as a means for the preservation and uplift of the status of the rulers as their husbands.

Even Sundara Chōla alias Parāntakā II (957-973 A.D.) too adopted the same diplomatic matrimonial policy. He also had two wives called Parāntakan Devi Amman, the daughter of a Chera king[21] and Vanavan Madevi, the daughter of the chieftain of Tirukkovalur.[22] By such aspects one could understand that the queens of the rulers were given recognition as tools for diplomatic contacts along with marriages.

An other undated inscription available in the **Śiganātharwara** temple at **Kudumiyamalai** reveals that there existed a relationship between the Pāndya and Chōla countries by the customary matrimonial practices among them. The following Tamil inscription attests it.[23]

> **"தென்னவன் செய்யபெருமான் திரு**
> **மதுரை மன்னவன்றன் மால் கயிற்**
> **று வல்லிக்கும் பொன்னி நாட்டலி**
> **க்குந் தானை அபயன் குலமகளிர்**
> **தாலிக்கு மென்றே தளை"**

[17] **S.I.I.** Vol.VI.No.31 and 32
[18] K.A. Nilakanta Sarti, **The Colas,** University of Madras, Madras, 1955, p.152
[19] **Epigraphia India,** Vol.XV, No.85.
[20] **S.I.I.** Vol.III, No.96.
[21] **Ibid.,** Vol.V. No.723
[22] **Ibid.,** Vol.VII, No.863.
[23] **Ibid.,** 651.

Uthama Chōla, the successor of Parantaka II (970-985 A.D.) too had the following five wives called Bhattan Dhanatongi, Malabadi Tennavan Mādēvi, Vilupparayar's daughter Kilanadigal and daughter of Paluvettarayan.[24] Among them Tribhuvana Madhevi was the chief queen.[25] Pañchavan Mādēvi, Chōlamādēvi, Aruran Ambalathadigal were his other wives.[26]

Rāja Rāja, the great (985-1014 A.D.) indulged in a pretty large number of wives. Ulagamadevi alias Thathi Sakthi Vidangi was the crowned queen. He adopted polygamy as a diplomatic measure also. The following facts will reveal that the marriages of the daughters of the rulers of other dynasties and minor chieftains assisted the suzerain power to maintain his elevated position through his wives politically. Cholamadevi,[27] Trilogyamadevi[28] Panchavanmadevi,[29] Abhimanavalli,[30] Lādamadēvi,[31] Prithivimādevi,[32] Minavanmādēvi,[33] Viranarayani,[34] Villavanmadevi[35] and Vanavan mādēvi were his wives.[36]

Rāja Rāja, the great, who was known for his versatility and multidimensional eminency in different aspects was a lover of fine arts and also showed greater veneration for the predecessors of his family members. For instance to honour his grand mother Śembiyan Mādēvi, he constructed the Sembiyan Madevi Peru mandapa at Tirumukkudal.[37] Thus the role of Royal women in politics assisted them to devote to religious activities.

Rājēndra Chōla's wives were from various places and by such matrimonial alliances Rajendra too adopted a diplomatic policy. His wives were

[24] 298 of 1908 and 494 of 1925
[25] 496 of 1925
[26] 491 and 492 of 1925
[27] S.I.I. Vol.II. No.42 and 46
[28] **Ibid.,** No.48.
[29] **Ibid.,** No.53.
[30] **Ibid.,** No.44.
[31] **Ibid.,** No.467.
[32] **Ibid.,** No.82.
[33] 298 of 1908
[34] **Ibid.,** Vol.V No.976
[35] **Ibid.,** No.981.
[36] **Ibid.,** No.982.
[37] K.K. Pillay, **Op.cit.,** p.205.

Mukkokilanadigal,[38] Arinthavan Madevi,[39] Vanavan Madevi,[40] Vīramādēvi,[41] Panchavan Mādēvi.[42]

Rājadhi Rāja I (1018-1054 A.D.) had two wives called Trailōkkiyamudayāl[43] and Ulagudaya Piratty.[44] They were recognized merely as queens. Arulmoli Nangai also known as Ulagamuludayal,[45] the wife of Vīra Rājendra (1063-1070 A.D.), was also recognized merely as the wife of ruler. Mukkokkilānadigal, Thiyagabathagai and Neriyan Madevi were Vikrama Chola's (1118-1135) queens.[46] It is worth to note that in 1127 A.D. due to the death of Mukkokkilanadigal, Thiyagalathagai became the crowned queen.[47] Kulothunga II (1133-1150 A.D.) had Thiagavalli and Mukkokkilanadigal as his wives.[48] Among them the latter was the Princess of Chedi and that exposes the diplomatic approach of the Chōla monarch Kulottunga II also. Thus the queens of the rulers served as a means for diplomatic activities.

4.4 QUEENS

It seems that queens did not take active part directly in the administration of the kingdom unless they had been crowned as Queens. However they involved in various activities and held might position in the kindgom.

K.A.Nilakanta Sastri says, "Each royal family had its own banner and seal mentioned in their inscriptions.... Queens occupied a position of equal importance with the king...."

[38] 73 of 1921
[39] 632 of 1909
[40] **S.I.I.** Vol.V.No.639
[41] 260 of 1915
[42] 464 of 1918
[43] 446 of 1918
[44] **Transactions of the Archaeological society,** Vol.I, pp.162-163
[45] **S.I.I.** Vol.II, No.58.
[46] **Ibid.,** Vol.V, No.5456
[47] **Ibid.,** Vol.III, No.181
[48] **Ibid.,** Vol.V, No.645

"Though the king was in theory an autocrat, there were sevaral modifying factors in practice. All the members of the royal family shared in the administration as far as possible and had opportunities of influencing the king's policy".[49]

These statements reflect the fact that the queens occupied a position of equal importance with the kings. According to one of the inscriptions at Kailasanatha Temple built by Rājaśimha at Kanjivaram, the queen of this Pallava King, Rangapātaka, had attained, "the mighty position of favourite with king Narasimharvishnu (Rajasimha)[50].

4.5 TITLES OF THE QUEENS

The terms such as **Bhuvana muludayāl$, Avani muludayal*, Dharani muludayal#, Mādēvi, Perundevi** etc., were the titles which they enjoyed. Thiyagavalli, who became the wife of Kulottunga I (1070-1120 A.D.) and at his 26th regnal year they were married. As she was hailed as **Elisai Vallabhi** it is obvious that she was an expert in music.

4.6 POSITION OF THE QUEENS

Further the queens had the names such as **Avani Mulududayāl, Tribhuvanamudayāl** and **Ulagudayāl*** and they prove that they attained fame and name throughout the kingdom due to their position as queens.[51] The elder queens were pioneers and models for the succeeding queens. Though, the kings followed polygamy for diplomatic reasons, there are no references about confrontations or enemity among the queens. Further when the names of the queens are assigned to irrigation tanks and canals one can estimate their affluent position. Even places were also called by their names due to their prestigious nature. Without any disparity the

[49] K.A.Nilakanda Sastri, A History of South Indian, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999, p.152. Ref: History and culture of Tamilnadu, Chitra Mahadevan : 'The epigraphs provide the names of the consorts of the Tamil Kings and chieftains enlogise their qualities and reveal their honourable position in the kingdom, p.138.

[50] SII, vol.I.No.29, p.22

[51] K.K.Pillay, **op.cit.**, pp.333-334

* The mistress of the world. Ref: SII. Vol.VI. No.72

The mistress of the whole world : SII. Vol. VI Nl 72.

rulers of greater dynasties had matrimonial alliances with Chieftains and other rulers mainly for achieving peace and security.

So at the higher level in politics caste or other disparities did not interfere. The kings and queens were all above caste and communal disparities. This tradition was adopted by Rajendra I.[52] Rajadhi Raja I[53] and Raja Raja II[54] too adhered to such practices without any deviation. The queens too had adopted the tradition of Śati or self immolation.

Such facts indicate the position of women during the Pāndya period. By their personal traits the women of specific traits gained fame and name in the society, even though they did not enjoy any property rights and had no property of their own. They too prove that the women of specific walks of life had the privilege of issuing grants for different purposes. But such efforts did not allow them to claim their independence from men. The following facts will attest such things. Pallava Niribadunga's second wife Vira Māhādēviyār executed the **Hiranyagarbha*** and **Tulābara#** sacrifices in the temple at Tirukkodika.[55] The Chola Adhitya I's two queens namely Tribhuvana Madevi alias Vayriyakkan and Ilangon pichchi too have contributed to the temples. Śembiyan Mādēvi, as a queen known for her donations like the Pallava queens contributed a lot to the establishment of the **Karralis** at Vriddhachalam,[56] Tiruturuthri,[57] Anangur[58] etc. Due to the impact and influence of the religious minded Chola queens, the wives of the rulers of the friendly status as well as the subordinate rulers of the Cholas too dedicated themselves for the execution of temple services. For instance Kadamba madevi wife of Vikkiannan who was the general of Ādhityā I contributed to many temples.[59]

[52] Pudukkottai state Inscriptions 96, 98 to 101.
[53] **Ibid.,** 108.
[54] **Ibid.,** 73.
[55] S.I.I. Vol. XII, No.74.
[56] A.R.E. 47 of 1918.
[57] 103 of 1926.
[58] 75 of 1926.
[59] S.I.I. Vol.III, Part III, No.89.
* Hiranyagarbha denotes a performance of sacrifice (velvi) and donating costly materials and gold.
It weighing one's self against gold, pearls or other such costly material and distributing the same to temples, etc.

Most of the Chola queens were also known for their contribution in the form of the dedicated grants of different categories. It was the privilege enjoyed by them. Gandarāditya (950-957 A.D.) wife Śembiyan Mahādēvi was responsible for the construction of the Thirukkottieswara temple at Tirukkodikaval, Tanjore District.[60] Sundara Chōla alias Parantaka II's (957-970) daughter Kundavai, who was the elder sister of Raja Raja, the great (985-1014 A.D.) announced grants to the temple at Thirumalapadi. Raja Raja I's wife Logamadevi by her own personal efforts constructed the Kshetrapala Temple at Tiruvarur. These facts reveal that the queens of most of the rulers of the renowned Pallava as well as Chōla dynasties were capable of maintaining their status by their dedication to philanthropic activities. The bounteous religious facts blended with economic activities assisted the enhancement of the status of the womenfolk of the royal families.

The queens did not stop with the offering of donations to the temples. Thibhuvana Madevi, wife of Uthama Chöla even purchased lands for the purpose of donations. While the boundaries of the lands are marked various names of irrigation canals and tanks are mentioned and they prove the economic pursuits of that period. When the names of such irrigation facilities are named after the Queens one can have an estimate of the importance assigned to the Royal women folk. The terms Śembiyan Mādēvi vaykkal, Parāntakan Madevi vaykkal, Śembiyan Mādēvi chery will attest the relationship between the Royal women and social welfare measures.[61] Even Mandapas were constructed in the name of queens called the Sembiyan Madevi Periya Mandapam in the Kailasa Mudayar temple of Sembiyan Madevi. This Mandapa was utilized for the meeting of the Sabha of that place. Such a measure is an evidence to expose the involvement of queens in the successful conduct of the administrative activities.[62]

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[60] K.K. Pillay, **Cholar Varalaru,** Tamilnadu Text Book Society, Chennai, 1977, p.153.
[61] 485 of 1925
[62] 36 of 1999

Māravarman Kulasekara II's twenty second regnal year (1345 A.D.) inscription too attests the importance offered to women when it refers to a donated land which was irrigated from the **Tribhuvana Mādēvi Pērēri** of **Tribhuvana Mādevi Chaturvēdi Mangalam***,[63] which was the grant of that queen. There prevailed a practice by women to take part in the welfare activities of the society.

The terms such as **Bhuvana muludayāl$**, **Avani muludayāl#**, **Dharāni muludayāl, Mādēvi, Perundēvi** etc., were the titles which they enjoyed. **Manavātti,**[64] **Ahamudayāl,**[65] **Pariyāl,**[66] were the terms used for women donors mentioned in different inscriptions[67] will highlight the position of women as the terms now-a-days are used for wives.

The terms such as **Mādēvi Pērangadi, Mādēvi Pērēri, Mādēvi Chatturvēdimangalam** etc., will testify to the exalted position of women as revealed by the inscriptions of different periods.

4.7 VENERATION TO QUEENS

During the eighth regnal year inscription of Raja Raja the great dated 992 A.D. stands to prove that there prevailed cordial relationship among the queens and the later also reveals that they showed greater veneration to the elders of the family. To celebrate the birthday of the queen Śembiyan Mādēvi, wife of Parantaka I (907-955 A.D.) he had donated the **Śembiyan Mādēvi Chatturvedimangalam**

During the reign period of Raja Raja I (985-1014 A.D.) in his 20th regnal (1005 A.D.) for the welfare of the mother Manchavi and father Parusadevar their son

* Chaturvedimangalam : Village owned by the brahmanas, mostly Taxfree; also called mangalam; written as Saruppetimangalam; Epigraphical Glossary, Tamilnadu Govt.Archeological Department, 2011, p.122

$ Ref : Pudukottai state Inscriptions, States that cholaking Kulothunga I, was steated enthroned along with Bhuvamuludaiyal, his queen, on the throne of victory.

Pudukottai state Inscriptions, no.125 Chola Chakkaravarthi was seated along with Avanimulududaiyal on the throne of the victory.

63 46 of 1986

64 **Ibid.**, Vol. VII, Nos 507, 515, 484, Vol. VIII, No.116 Vol.XXIII Nos 33, 319.

65 **Ibid.**, Vol. XXII, No.XXIII, No.346.

66 **Ibid.**, Vol. VIII, No.215.

67 **Ibid.**, Vol. XXIII, No.223, Vol.V, No.520.

Someswaradevar made arrangements for the burning of a lamp in the temple at Thirnkkoharnam.[68] Such facts indicate the son's veneration towards his parents.

Being the worthy son of a worthy father, Rājēndra Chola (1012-1044 A.D.) too followed the policy of his father scrupulously. Being a ruler who venerated his elders showed reverence to Śembiyan mādēvi and created an idol of Śembiyan Mādēvi and installed it at Gangaikonda Chōleeswaram.[69] Such facts indicate that the positions of royal women were venerable and they were maintained by the matrimonial alliances with other royal families known for their equal status in all respects.

Further, when the royal women were hailed as **Kalai Ma Mathar, Kadal Sulnda Por Mathar, Sri Mathar** one can have an estimate of the status and veneration assigned to women.[70]

An inscription available in the Kanavandeeswara temple at Udayarkoil, datable to the fourth regnal year i.e., 1137 A.D. of Kulothunga II (1133 to 1150 A.D.) through deals with the gift of a tax free land attaches greater importance to the chartity of women and other aspects.[71] Such facts indicate that the two women of noble qualities were venerated in the society and also the status of women. The same inscription exposes to the appreciation of women when a great tank is named as **Mādēvi pērēri.**[72] This social tradition is a continuous one even from the days of the **Śangam** age. They too were venerated due to their economic, religious and political activities.

Another inscription available at Simhachalam (Waltair) dated 1396 A.D reveals the various activities executed by them according to their status as given below.[73]

[68] **Ibid.,** 183
[69] Madras, **Epigraphic Record for the year** 1926 p.105.
[70] Ibid., Vol.VI, No.456 and ARE, 1899, No.20
[71] 406 of 1902
[72] **Ibid,** Vol. XI, No. 1035
[73] 8 of 1979

The Tanjore Maratha rulers as a customary practice had adopted a tradition of burying the dead queens and to construct tombs over the burial ground. On 11th March 1911 when Kawrambabai, wife of Shivaji Maharaj Sahib died she was buried and a tomb was constructed.[74]

4.8 WOMEN'S MEMBERSHIP IN SABHA*

In addition to the role of women in the temple services there were certain exceptional women who even served as judges of peace. The Manamai inscription mentions that a lady was included in the judicial committee of the village assembly[75]. Like this one lady called Perumkarunayatti alies Tevarkalammai was one of the niyayathar or judicial officials of Uttaramathur[76].

The women were safeguarded from losing their prestige and for maintaining their self respect they were allowed even by attending the Sabha for explaining their inability to pay a tax. In this regard the inscription belonging to the period of Raja Raja (985 to 1014 A.D.) available at Kaverippakkam indicates that at the request of the Vellala of Venbaikkudi Nadu stands testimony to the tradition of avoiding women in attending the meeting of the Ursabha.[77] Such facts indicate the placement of women by the elders and administrators. It is also revealed that the women had no right to take part in the public deliberations.

4.9 LADY OFFICIALS

While the women of the ancient Tamil country were called urimai surram and mudirpendir, their participation in the judicial administration[78] was also a laudable act. As this is revealed by the Manamai temple inscription, the Uttaramathur inscription too attests this fact.[79]

[74] A.R.E 259 of 1909
[75] A.R.E 35 of 1910
[76] **Ibid.,** Vol. XIII. No.312
[77] 259 of 1909.
* Village Assembly
[78] **Archaeological Survey Report,** Part II, 1910
[79] **S.I.I.** Vol.V, No.520

The lady officials of the state too were playing their role in the establishment of the offices. One Somayan Amitravalli was a lady official employed by Lokamadevi, the queen of Raja Raja, the great.[80] Other lady called Muttana Namangai was also a lady officer of queen.

The Hariyur Kunjeswara temple inscription dated 1255 A.D mentions that one Gnanakumari, daughter of Kunje Setti was made as the Udayali i.e., the trustee of the temple. She was also entrusted with the right called Vibhudhipatta to maintain the accounts of the temple. She was also a member of the mahaganangallu, the management of the temple.[81] The women were included as Adhikarapalam in the temple administration.[82]

The employment of women in political services was also a continuous process prevalent in Tamilnadu. Even during the time of Mallikarjuna, the Vijayanagar ruler, Kalathi Nachiyar, Parvathi, Tirumalai Nachichiyar were appointed and in lieu of their services they obtained land gifts. An inscription available at the Choleesevarar mudayar temple of Kadayathur in Dharmapuri district dated 1470 A.D too attests this fact.[83]

"Poygainattu Thiruvayarru Olagamādēvisuram irdayarkku Aruthara Pallavaroyanum adhikarichi Anitha Valliyum"[84] is the statement which reveals that even ladies were also appointed as guardians of the ornaments of the temple like the male guardians. This is attested by the 32nd regnal year (1248 A.D.) inscription of Raja Raja III (1216-1260 A.D.). Another inscription of the 24th regnal year (1240 A.D.) of the same ruler too reveals that there were women appraisers to check up the validity of the gold ornaments of the Olagamadeswaram Udayar temple.[85] This has

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[80] **Epigraphia Caruatica**, Vol. V, 108; S.I.I. V, No.520
[81] Y. Subberayalu, **The State in Medieval South India** (600-1350) 1976, pp.26-27.
[82] 127 of 1974
[83] **Ibid.**, V of 520
[84] **Ibid.**, 521
[85] 127/1974

been attested by the references that Kovaludayan and adhikarichi Erudan Kunjaramalli had arranged to inscribe that in a stone.

The Kadakathur Choleeswara temple inscription contains a detail which reveals the position of women in politics. The inscription dated in **Śaka** date 1392 (1470 A.D.) that the Vijayanagar king Mallikarjuna appointed two ladies called Kalathi Nachchiyar and Thirumalai Nachchiyar in the service of the palace and they were paid in the form of land grants.[86] This too testify to the nature of the status of women.

The women were even employed in the temples for helping the learned scholars and cattle living in the **mandapa** in the temple.[87] Such practices prevalent even from the period of Raja Raja the great. Samayan Amirtavalli was a lady assistant of that nature.[88] As they were wealthy and economically independent, a lady assistant called Muttana Nangai gifted costlier jewels studded with precious stones.[89]

4.10 APPOINTMENTS AND THE POSITION OF VELAIKKARIS

The chieftains of Tamilnadu also engaged **Velaikkaris,** the female members belonging to the **Vēlaikkāra*** army as personal securities. For instance the Elavanasur inscription available in the Gramarodhanatha temple of that place mentions that a **Vēlaikkāri*** called Devapperumal was always loyal and dedicated to her master. She had mentioned that she would not survive after death of her master. She also pointed out that if anybody prevented her form falling into the funeral fire of her husband (Committing **Śati**), it should be treated as if they had given their wives to the enemies.[90]

The chieftains even had the right to have **velaikkaris,** (servant maids) who were loyal to their masters. It was essential for them to take a oath in assuring their

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[86] E.I. Vol. XXI No.38
[87] S.I.I. Vol. V No.520
[88] **Ibid.,** Vol. V No.512
[89] 156 of 1906
* trusted warriors ever prepared and ready to lay down their lives in the sacrifice of their overlord. Epigraphical Glossary, p.201. It denotes servant also.
[90] S.I.I. Vol. XXII No.156

loyalty. An undated record also attests this fact. A lady by name Devapperumal was a **velaikkari** of Raja Raja Malaiyakularayan alias Nirerraperumāl (Edirigalnayan) declared her devotion towards her master by saying that she would never survive after the death of her master. She was desirous of committing **Śati** or self immolation. If anybody impedes she pointed out that they will be considered as men who had given their wives to other men.[91] This record specifies the loyalty, firm conviction and morality maintained by servant maids. It also stresses the value given to deity consciousness and monogamy.

4.11 APPOINTMENTS/DEDICATION OF WOMEN TO TEMPLE /PALACE WORKS

The common women according to political traditions were not given due recognition and were treated mostly slaves with the exception of the queens and the wives of the servants of the Royal family.

Women were appointed to do various activities in temples such as powdering turmeric and other works.

For clearing the temple and to maintain the cleanliness of the temple there were women servants.[92] They were wearing **Kulai** and were obedient to the temple authorities and the emperor.[93]

The 19th regnal year (1235 A.D.) inscription of Raja Raja III (1216-1260 A.D.) reveals the dedication of five ladies called Periya Nachi, her daughter Mari, her sisters Kauthalvi, Thiruvandi and Vaduhalvi hereditarily to the temple of Thiruvorriyur **udayar** to do the work of dehusking of paddy by Thiruvehambamudayan Senthamaraikkannar alias Vaiyradarayan of Virukambakkam alias Chenninallur.[94]

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[91] **Ibid.,** 241
[92] **Ibid.,** 256
[93] **Ibid.,** Vol.II No.558 and ARE 1892 No.110
[94] **Ibid.,** No.79

4.12 KOVIL PENDUGAL OR PENDATTY

The women served in the temples were known as **Kōvil Pēndugal**# or even **pendātty*** in different inscriptions. They enjoyed the position as the head of the women servant maids functioning in the temple. Now the term **pendātty** refers only to wife. So one should notice the different meanning assigned to the temple. Importance should be assigned to etymological corruption.

4.13 PĒNDIR PANDARAM

During the reign period of Rajendraja's 17th regnal year an inscription datable to 1031 A.D. available in the Choleeswara temple at Parambur reveals the availability of specific temple women servants called **Pēndir Pandāram** in the temple.[95] This practice was in vogue even during the time of Raja Raja I also.[96] Various inscriptions available in temples such as Thirumalai Kadambar temple of Narthamalai,[97] Kulattur Swami temple[98] etc., reveal the employment of **Pēndir Pandāram** in the temples by the Chola rulers. Thus the women were empolyed in temple activites and by that they were allowed to earn their livelihood.

4.14 CAPTURING OF WOMEN AS WAR CAPTIVES

The capturing of women as war captives after a successful war also was in vogue during the reign period of Raja Raja III (1216-1260 A.D.).[99] As stated by the 16th regnal year inscription (1232 A.D.) of Raja Raja III (1216-1260 A.D.) available in the Devanayaka Perumal temple of Tiruvendipuram the women were taken as war captives by the rulers after the victorious wars.[100] Thus there prevailed disparities among men of different categories. Though the queens were taken as war captives

[95] **Ibid.,** No.98
[96] **Ibid.,** No.110
[97] **Ibid.,** No.98
[98] 142 of 1902 and E.I.Vol.VII.No.23
[99] E.I. Vol. VII, No.23
[100] **Pudukottai State Inscriptions.,** 409.
Woman, plural of Pendatty, Epigraphical Glossary, p.162.
* Woman, woman servant, Epigraphical Glossary, p.162.

they were kept under custody in a place called **Velam***, which was place for encamping the women of high order.[101]

4.15 SLAVERY

The action war captives also paved the way for the introduction of slavery in the society. Even women slaves were sold to others by administrative officials such as **Nādalvan**. But the amount recovered by the sale was deposited in the **Śri Pandaram** or royal treasury. Even slaves were sold to the temples by women.[102] They were also included as courtesans.[103]

As seen earlier due to economic poverty, distresses and household difficulties, women had sold themselves as slaves to the temples. With the acknowledgement and order of the ruler one Vayiayadhayar, a land lord and his wife who had many slaves and servants to cater to their needs, sold themselves to temple. Among them there were 32 people including women and children. Like that two accountants of the temple had sold two servant maids to the temples by writing a deed called "Alvilai Bramana Isaivutheetu".

The army Captain called Alakiya Pallavarayan in 1119 A.D offered the daughters of his family to the Thiruvalan Koil temple after branding them on their forehead with the trident mark[104]. In the same way a Vellala of Tanjore in 1201 A.D sold himself and his two daughters as **adimai** to the temple after getting 110 **kāśu** from the temple.[105]

An inscription of the period of Raja Raja III (1216-1260 A.D.) dated to his 19th regnal year (1235 A.D.) reveals that women were sold as slaves to the temples even

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* Velam - fortified place, ladies of high rank captured in war were kept as prisoners by the cholas and they were treated as slaves. Ref: Pudukottai state inscriptions, Part I, No.82 also.

[101] A.R.E 230 of 1927-28.

[102] K.V. Raman, **Op.cit.**, pp.229-230.

[103] A.R.E 230 of 1921-1922

[104] **Ibid**, 86 of 1911-1912

[105] **Ibid.**, 65, January 2005, p.23

during the periods between Rajadhi Raja I (1018-1054 A.D.) and Kulottunga I (1071-1122 A.D.) and the names are directed to be recorded by Raja Raja III. The names such as Aludayal, daughter of Achapidaran, her daughter Anda Nangai, her sister Selvam, Narayani, Perralkottu, Sirrambala Mudayal. Thangaikottur, Thiruvindakothu, Thiruvenkattunangai, Periyal, Soranatti etc., were names of some of the ladies mentioned in the inscription, which attests the position of women, who were engaged as slaves hereditarily.[106] They were sold for a sum of 19 **Kāśus**. Uyyavandalsani, Annayardal, Periyandal, Kulundal, Sorudayeselvi, Sridevinangai etc., are the other names of ladies who were sold as slaves. Thus the women enjoyed prerogatives and also served as slaves.

It was also felt as a significant and commendable deed to donate women to temple either as slaves or servant maids or **Devaradiyars.** The 41st regnal year (1113 A.D.) of Kulottunga I's (1071-1122 A.D) inscription available at the Siva temple of Vallam attests these facts.[107]

Maravaman Sundarapandya II's (1216-1238) 13th regnal year (1239 A.D.) inscription attests this fact. It also points out the tradition of selling women born of a low order by giving a specified sum due to her secondary position During the reign period of Raja Raja III (1216 to 1260 A.D.), in his 19th regnal year (1235 A.D.) inscription available in the Northern wall of the **Mahāmandapa** of the Virattaneswara temple of Korukkai[108] reveals that the ruler was having the privilege of purchasing women slaves. It was also a customary practice because the same inscription reveals that slaves were purchased even during the reign periods of Kulottunga I (1071-1122) and Raja Raja II (1166-1182 A.D.). It is worth to note here that even individuals and families in total had sold themselves as slaves. Choli, wife of Achchapidaran, Aludayal Anda Nangai, Selvam, Mandayandi Alogi, Andal, Mandai, Perral, Periyal,

[106] 223 of 1917
[107] C. Chandravanan, "Kalvettil Irai Paniyalargal", **Kalvettu, Ibid.**, pp.37-38
[108] **Ibid.**, p.40

Alvomangai, umajandal, Porsatti, Naarayari, Adavalan Kothil Selvi, Perral kothu, Tirucivanbolamudayal, Selkothu, Perunkadi, Marrandayal kottu, Thangai kothu, Thiruvinkothu, Chandrasekara Thiruvenkattu Nangai, Mandayandi, Urnagendal, Periyandal, Nidhyakalyani pitchan, Kahndal, Sorudayal Selvi, Sorudayal Sridevi Nangai etc, are the names of the women slaves available in this inscription. Such facts stand testimony to the inferior position of women and also the existence of women slavery in the Tamil country during the Chola period.

Another unpublished inscription available at Angamangalam Narasinga Eswara temple dated 1425 A.D. reveals that four women and four men were donated as **pura dhanam** to that temple and agreed to serve as servants to execute that duty. Ramadevi, Perri, Perthi and Selvi were the women mentioned.[109] Thus it is evident that even women were sold as slaves to the temple for executing specific duties. A similar inscription is also available in the Courralanatha temple of Courralam. This informs that ten persons including men and women were donated to the temple to execute **parikaram** the regular rituals uninterruptedly. The following women were entrusted to the temple **Śabayor** or authorities of the temple. Sivanthal, her daughter Piratti, Nallal, Kamali, Ennaivartha Perumal were the ladies donated.[110] Such facts inform that the women were having only a subordinated or secondary position when compared with the men and it was a custom to associate them as servants to the temples due to economic and social considerations.

The **Śripandāram** or the state treasury offered 32 **Kāśus** for purchasing one Amana Andi and his two daughters Viz., Ariyal and her sister Nambiyandi as slaves to the mutt attached to the Sedapureeswara temple due to the famine which occured in the 23rd regnal year (1201 A.D.) of Kulottunga III. This act was executed because of the sale of three measures of paddy at the cost of one **Kāśu**. The state encouraged

[109] **Pudukottai State Inscriptions.**, 459.
[110] **Ibid.**, 459

slavery at times of natural calamities and unhesitatingly even women were also accepted as slaves at times of natural distresses and disasters due to their own will and pleasure for their own welfare and benefit.

Parākrama Pāndya's (1479-1499 A.D.) 12th regnal (1491 A.D.) year inscription available in the Satyamurthy temple of Thirumeyyam mentions about the possessive right of land granted to the slave called Sial, her aunt Aludayal, her daughter in law Periyanachi and daughter Tholudhi to enjoy such privileges as a hereditary possession. So the women slaves of the state were also recognized and granted the rights and privileges over the land.

Siral, Avudayal, Vabathi, Manri, Pommi, Toluthi were the women who were the slaves associated with the Satyamurthy temple of Tirumeyyam and they were to execute many mean activities in the temple. Those hereditary women slaves were granted lands to be utilized by them in lieu of their services to the temple.[111] thus the role of was blended with economics and religion.

The women inolved in agriculture were called **kudiyal** and when the land was sold, the women were also sold. The statement **"Kalaniyayum Kudiyalayum Vilaikku Virru"**[112] will indicate the sale adopted by the people.

4.16 WOMEN SERVANTS OF THE PALACE

There were women in the services of the Chola monarchs. The women servants of the palace were not slaves and were getting grants in lieu of their services. All the members of the royal family were having the right to utilise the services of women.

4.17 WOMEN AND LAW

Like the kings, who captured women as war captives, even when a man committed a blunder and when his properties were forfeited or seized it included

[111] **S.I.I.** Vol, XVII. No.544
[112] **Ibid.,** Vol, XXII-I, No.80

even his servant maids and they were made as the property of the temple in the name called **Thirunamathukkani**. When Pallan Kurakkunran, a government official of Rajendra I, delibertately took one Sendan Umayal to the king's court and compelled her to pay the tax she denied that and committed suicide. So the official was accused and was sentenced to pay a sum of 32 **Kalanju pon** as fine and that attests the veneration given to women eventhough she the was a old lady.[113] The women were the causes for cases of lust. When the wife of Angadi Porsaman was liked by another man called Siralan, he was caught and fined. When a lady called Kochathan Kaman Aghamirdayal threw a stick towards her daughter she died after 24 days. So the mother was arrested, enquired and ordered to pay for burning a perpetual lamp.[114] Thus the women were also brought under justice and even for death, severe punishments were not given. Thye were allowed to rectify their defects.[115] So punishments pertaining to women were merely reformatory in character.

From this inscription it is revealed that there were some disputes which were reported and settled by the administrators and temple authorities. While the alove said people were relieved of the works such as clearning the floor, lighting lamps, dehusking paddy for providing food (**neyvedyam**) to the deity, they were directed to fly whisk, to do the works executed by the **Dēvaradiyārs,** to execute the dance called **Varikkolam*** and to sing and also to worship God without any difficulty. These works were allotted to them after the enquries conducted by the **Śirmahēśwarās[$]**, **Stānathar[#], Nattar, Vira Chola Anukkar, Kaikkōlar*** in the presence of pontitf of Bikshamadam held at Viyakarna Danan Tirukkavanam.[116] Thus the status of women of specific order was maintained in tact.

[113] **Ibid.,** No.92
[114] 266 of 1923
[115] ARE 1912 No.212
* a variety of Dance performed in temples.
[$] congregation of Saiva devotees having a voice in the management of the affairs of a Saiva Temple.
[#] Temple Executive
* warriors, weavers, also a class of temple servant.
[116] **S.I.I.** No.1411

The Vaheeswara temple inscription offers a unique story about a **Dēvaradiyār,** while Thirunedunkolam **Dēvaradiyār** had a Brahmin in her house and both of them were executed. When he came to the temple he lost his eye sight. So, to expiate his sins he wanted to offer lands to the temple. Thus it is evident that the **Dēvaradiyār** if she indulged in adulteration she was punished. So it is evedent that moral reteriorationof the Devaradiyars was not at all approved.

In a quarrel between two members when one died, the accused had to pay a fine of 15 **kāśus**. Among that five **kāśus** should go to Bhumisuara mudayanaynar and the rest should go to the wife of the dead. Thus the women were rendered full justice for the grievance done to them intemtionally.

Even when one of the competitors died in a dual the wife of the deceased was used to make arrangements for the burning of a lamp in the Vashisteswara temple at Uraiyur. The 24th regnal year (1009 A.D.) inscription of Raja Raja I (985-1014 A.D.) attests this fact.[117] This is further substantiated by an inscription available in the Siva temple at Anamalai in Pollachi. Vattarnariyan Vanchi Vellala's wife had offered 10 **kalanju pon** for burning a perpetual lamp.[118]

The second regnal year (1014 A.D.) eipgraphic record of Rajendra I (1012-1044 A.D.) records the 10 **kalanjus*** of gold deposited with the **Urar** of Palaippandal for burning a perpetual lamp by a merchant called Angadi Porraman in memory of his Piratti Siralan. The reason for the grant was that the latter trespassed into the former's house in the night and tried to assault his mistress in his presence by which act he was engaged so much as to stab him to death.[119] This reveals the importance assigned to the morality of women.

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[117] 214 of 1927, 28
[118] S.I.I. Vol. XXVII No.72
* a cold coin current in olden days also the equivalent weight.
[119] **Ibid.,** Vol. XXII, No.80 and ARE 1906 No.80.

The third regnal year (1055 A.D.) of Rajendra II (1052-1064 A.D.) records the gift of 32 **Kāśus** in memory of a lady by same Sendan Umaiyal for burning a perpetual lamp in the tample of Tantonri Mahadevar at Vaiyalur alias Rajendrapuram by one Malayamankatti Melburdayan Palanguran Kunran. The gift is said to be in response to a demand made by the community called **Nangudisai Pattinenbhumi. Nanadesi,** who held him responsible for the suicide of the lady by poison because of some threat held out by him with regard to a tax due. Thus the inscriptions reveal that the women were feeble minded and went even to the extent of ending their lives for the strict and several administrative measures. Here the killing of her was guilt since the deceased was the mother of a security man, the chief of his group caused him to take her life. However by way of acceptance of the guilt they made arrangements to burn a lamp before God and relieved of that curse.[120] The state was executing various welfare activities.

The insult such as the cutting of the nose of a lady was considered as an act of disrespect.[121]

Even the **Dēvaradiyārs** had their own rights in the administration of the temple. When the **Pattaikkarai,** an ornament of the **Dēvaradiyār Pallavaraya Manikkam** was stolen by Dittiyandi Cilamban and when that theft was noticed the thief was unable to repay any amount. So he made an agreement with the temple authorities to give up his **Kāniyatchi*** over his lands to the temple treasury. The money recovered was handed over to the **Pallavarāya Mānikkam**, the **Devaradiyar.** So the involvement of the **Devaradiyar** in the theft case will highlight the superior nature of those set of people in the administration.[122]

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[120] **Pudukottai State Inscriptions.** 108
[121] **Ibid.,** 867
* hereditary ownership or enjoyment.
[122] **Trevancore Archeological Series** Vol. VII, Part II, No.27

It was believed that **Pulappedi** and **mannappedi** were the horrible social customs which prevailed in Thiurvithankodu region. Even women of high calibre were affected. So Veera Keralavarman, the ruler of Travancore on 1695 A.D. (which is in Kollam era dated 871) had ordered the removal of that tradition and also asked women to get rid of their sins by taking bath. As such it is obvious that the Kerela kings had the right to protect women all status by his orders.[123]

Thus the selling of women as slaves degrades the status and prestige of women they were confined to the tradition of **stridhanam***. Due to the impact and influence of Queens and **Dēvaradiyārs** the private women had dedicated themselves to the philanthropic activities and constructed temples or had installed deities in the shrines. They even constructed the **mandapās** too. They were known for their charitable nature and noble qualities as mentioned above. They even purchased lands and transferred them to the temples. Like **stridhānam, talipputtu** was another tradition which the society approved. They had even registered their marriages and the term **Tālipputtu Pramanam** will attest it. The women were fascinated by Jain traditions and had announced grants even to the Jain **Pallis#**. They had contacts with **urar, Mahāśabayor$,** the administrators of the areas.

The above said factors define the position and status of women in politics in those period according to the inscriptions. These factors reveal that the women's position in politics is far better in the midieval period rather than in other period.

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[123] K.V.Raman, **Pandiyar Varalaru** (T) Tamilnadu Text Book Society, Madras, 1977, p.222.
* dowry
Temple of a religion other than the Hinduism.
$ Maha sabha means general body meeting of a Sabha. Mahasabayor belongs to this body.

CHAPTER V

WOMEN AND THE SOCIETY

Chapter V

WOMEN AND THE SOCIETY

According to the Dictionary of sociology, a society could be described as any self-perpetuating, human grouping occupying a relatively bounded territory, possessing its own more or less distinct culture and institutions.

Every society has its own ideals, aspirations, values and culture. These are the indicators of the characteristic nature of the society. Therefore the values of the society, existed during the Chōḷa, Pāndiyā and Pallava period from 6th to 18th century, determine the position of the women besides economic factors.

The pattern of life system of the People, the function of the society and transition of the society are due to the values of the society.

The relation between the values and pattern of life system of the society are explained by the scholars in a different way.

According to Karl Marx, the Economic factor forms the structure of a society. According to the Economic factors of the society values are developed and conscience of the society is controlled. The type of Economic system paves the way and the formation of values and its concepts. The system production forms the classes as capitalists and workers.

According Max Weber, the values and its concepts that prevailed in the society including economic factors determine the life system of the people.

To understand the position of women in society, the study about the structure of the society is essential besides the concept of the society.

This chapter mainly focus on the position of women in society that prevailed in the period, taken for the research. The Inscriptions of this period provide sources

abundantly to describe the position of women in society. This requires the analysis of nature and structure of society.

The Tamil society of the ancient period was a male dominated one and actually it was patriarchal in nature. The women were treated as the mistress of the house or housewife and they occupied a venarble position in the society of the contemporary period. They were expected to lead a life subservient and subordinated to men. They were compelled to maintain chastity and morality and were expected to be obedient to elders and husbands. They were to execute all the family duties and responsiblities assigned to them traditionally in a customary way. Though there are common traits as exhibited in literature and other accounts by various writers, it becomes a must to have an analysis of the social status or their role in the society as women as depicted in the different inscriptions of various rulers of distinctive communities. So an attempt will be made in this chapter to have an estimate of women and the society as gleaned from the inscriptions.

The women during the medieval period too continued to maintain their veneration and social status. They never involved in public activities and had no evincing interest in the political activities especially in the monarchical form of government. The traditional responsibility of being dutiful by the wife to the husband continued to survive. But they shared their responsibilities with their husbands. While the poor ladies were coolies they were engaged in different occupations such as mat making, springing, weaving and sale of curd, buttermilk, fish etc. They continued their participation in dance and music. While the marriages of poor people were simple many rituals were included in the marriages during the medieval period.[1] The **Nāchchiyār Tirumoli** of Andal and **Periyālvār Tirumōli** of Periyalvar too contain details about the rituals associated with the marriages. Though no details are

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[1] K.V. Raman, **Pandiyar Varalaru** (T) Tamilnadu Text Book Society, Madras, 1977, p.222.

available regarding the rights of women they had the privileges of announcing grants to temples.[2]

5.1 POLYGAMY

The kings adopted the tradition of taking women and princesses as war captives that led to the tradition of polygamy. Also to have a diplomatic relationship the rulers have married eithr daughter or the sisters of other country rulers and there prevailed polygamy. As it was a custom among the Chola rulers to adopt polygamy Parāntaka I (907-955 A.D.) was not an exception. He had many wives. Chera princess Kokkilānadigal was his Chief queen.[3] He had married the daughter of Paluvettarayan of Paluvur,[4] Arumoli Nangai,[5] Villavan Mādēvi,[6] Tribhuvana Madevi,[7] Valavan Mādēvi,[8] Chōlasigāmani,[9] Chōla Mādēvi[10] and Tennavan Mādēvi.[11]

Arinjaya (956-957 A.D.), the brother of Gandaradhitha[12] too had four wives called Kundavai, Kothai Pirātty, Kalyāni and Bhudhi Aditha Pidāri.

Sundara Chōla alias Parāntaka II (957-973 A.D.) too adopted the same diplomatic matrimonial policy. He also had two wives called Parāntakan Devi Amman, the daughter of a Chera king[13] and Vanavan Mādēvi, the daughter of the chieftain of Tirukkōvalur.[14]

Uthama Chōla, the successor of Parāntaka II (970-985 A.D.) too had the following five wives called Bhattan Dhanatongi, Malabādi Tennavan Mādēvi, Vilupparayar's daughter Kilanadigal and daughter of Paluvettarāyan.[15] Among them

[2] **Ibid.,** p.224.
[3] **S.I.I.** Vol, II, No.76.
[4] **Epigraphia Indica,** Vol.XV. No.5
[5] S.I.I. Vol.VII 520.
[6] **Ibid.,** Vol.III, No.110.
[7] 130 of 1931
[8] **S.I.I.** Vol V, No.547.
[9] **Ibid.,** No.525.
[10] **Ibid.,** No.524.
[11] **Ibid.,** No.601.
[12] **Ibid.** Vol.VI.No.31 and 32
[13] **Ibid.,** Vol.V. No.723
[14] **Ibid.,** Vol.VII, No.863.
[15] 298 of 1908 and 494 of 1925

Tribhuvana Mādēvi was the chief queen.[16] Panchavan Madevi, Chōlamādēvi, Aruran Ambalathadigal were his other wives.[17]

Rāja Rāja, the great (985-1014 A.D.) had many wives. Ulagamādevi alias Thathi Sakthi Vidangi was the crowned queen. Chōlamādēvi,[18] Trilogyamadevi[19] Panchavanmadevi,[20] Abhimanavalli,[21] Lādamādēvi,[22] Prithivi- mādēvi,[23] Minavanmādēvi,[24] Viranarayani,[25] Villavanmādēvi[26] and Vanavan- mādēvi were his wives.[27]

Rājēndra Chōla's wives were Mukkōkilānadigal,[28] Arinthavan Mādēvi,[29] Vānavan Mādēvi,[30] Viramādēvi,[31] Panchavan Mādēvi.[32]

Rājadhi Rāja I (1018-1054 A.D.) had two wives called Trailokkiyamudayal[33] and Ulagudaya Pirātty.[34]

Arulmoli Nangai also known as Ulagamuludayal,[35] the wife of Vira Rājendra (1063-1070 A.D.), was also recognized merely as the wife of ruler. Thiyagavalli, who became the wife of Kulottunga I (1070-1120 A.D.) and at his 26th regnal year they were married. As she was hailed as **Elisai Vallabhi** it is obvious that she was an expert in music. Further the queens had the names such as **Avani Mulududayāl,**

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[16] 496 of 1925
[17] 491 and 492 of 1925
[18] S.I.I. Vol.II. No.42 and 46
[19] **Ibid.,** No.48.
[20] **Ibid.,** No.53.
[21] **Ibid.,** No.44.
[22] **Ibid.,** No.467.
[23] **Ibid.,** No.82.
[24] **Ibid.,** fo1908
[25] **Ibid.** Vol.V No.976
[26] **Ibid.,** No.981.
[27] **Ibid.,** No.982.
[28] 73 of 1921
[29] 632 of 1909
[30] **S.I.I.** Vol.V.No.639
[31] 260 of 1915
[32] 464 of 1918
[33] 446 of 1918
[34] **Transactions of the Archaeological society,** Vol.I, pp.162-163
[35] **S.I.I.** Vol.II, No.58.

Tribhuvanamudayāl and **Ulagudayāl** and they prove that they attained fame and name throughout the kingdom due to their position as queens.[36] Mukkokkilan adigal, Thiyagabathagai and Neriyan Mādēvi were Vikrama Chōla's (1118-1135) queens.[37] It is worth to note that in 1127 A.D. due to the death of Mukkokkilanadigal, Thiyagalathagai became the crowned queeṇ.[38] Kulothunga II (1133-1150 A.D.) had Thiagavalli and Mukkokkilanadigal as his wives.[39] Among them the latter was the Princess of Chēdi and that exposes the diplomatic approach of the Chōla monarch Kulottunga II also. Thus the Queens of the rulers served as a means for diplomatic activities.

5.2 ŚTRIDHANAM

Though polygamy was prevalent in the royal families monogamy was the general order even among the common public also. While this exposes the importance assigned to women at the time of marriage, the custom of offering **Mahakkōdai** or **Śtridhaṅam** too existed then.[40] It was a customary practice among the people to give **seedhanam (Stridhanam)** to the bride groom as bride price at the time of the marriage.[41]

The queens too had their hand in the economic pursuits in some way of other. In the same way, the same queen ie.Tribhuvana Mādēvi, wife of Uthama Chola (973-985 A.D.) had purchased lands, which were granted as **Śtridhanam** to two ladies of **Śembiyan Mādēvi Chatturvēdimangalam.**

It must be remembered that during the period of the Chōlas dowry system caused havocs to women and the married women revived land grants called **mahatkodai.**[42] She alone enjoyed the right to spend their grants in any way she

[36] K.K.Pillay, **op.cit.**, pp.333-334
[37] **S.I.I.** Vol.V, No.5456
[38] **Ibid.**, Vol.III, No.181
[39] **Ibid.**, Vol.V, No.645
[40] 364 of 1909
[41] 411 of 1914
[42] 354 of 1909.

liked. The husbands had no right to spend those amounts. If he spent that amount he had to give a specific quantum of land as compensation for his expenses.[43] The issue of **parisam** to the married women was condemned and it was decided even to ostracise the husband and his father who offered to the **parisam.**[44]

There prevailed a custom of receiving **Śtridhānam** by the son in law from the father of his wife and that was in the force of land, which could be utilised in anyway by him.[45] The same thing could be attested by another inscription available in the Adhipuriswara temple of Nannilam.[46] Since a father in law had refered to the sale of land by his son-in-law in the same way as mentioned earlier it is obvious that there prevailed specific customs to which women were also made as a party.

An inscription dated in **Śakā** era 1347 which is equal to 1425 A.D. refers to a social custom of offering money to the bride before perfoming the marriage ceremony.[47] The girls were given in hand to the bridegroom gratuituously by their fathers as that was the custom that prevailed in the Brahmin families. This inscription informs that both the father who accepted money and the bridegroom who paid money for the bride were punished and had to be excommunicated from their caste. This decision had been taken, while all the learned Brahmins hailing from Karnataka, Tamil, Telugu and Lata regions, who settled in **Padaividu Rājya** attended the meeting held in front of the Gopinathan shrine[48].

During the 11th regnal year of (1262 A.D.) of Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I (1251-1268 A.D.) one Anangichami had sold her mother's one **Veli** land to the **Dēvakanmis*** of the Thiruvalinatha temple. The Anangichami was the wife of Manavala Bhattan of **Rājagambira Chatturvedimangalam**. These lands were her property assigned to her as **Śtrithānam** (maintenance) and **Samskara Dakshina.**

[43] 39 of 1925.
[44] **S.I.I** Vol.I, No.56.
[45] 346 of 1925
[46] 472of 1978
[47] **S.I.I.** Vol. I, No.50
[48] **Ibid.**,Vol.I, No.56
* Devakanmi means servant of god, executive in charge of the temple affair.

The Irugur copper plate which is in the possession of Ramasamy Gurukkal of the Siva temple of Irugur exposes the different rights and privileges granted to the ancestors of the family of the said **Gurukkal**. It was granted due to the services rendered by Amarabhuyangan, a Brahmin. The important thing to be noted is that the women were entitled to have **Stridhanam** and the right to use a double conch at the time of their marriages. This grant is dated as the 15th regnal year (1000 A.D.) of Raja Raja I (985-1014 A.D.)[49] Social privileges assigned to women too find their place in the inscription.

In the same way, another record of the same ruler Kulothunga III (1178 to 1217/18 A.D.) of the same year ie. his 33rd regnal year (1211 A.D.) had been announced the record that the registration of the sale of land by one lady by name Antappulapperumal and her daughter by name Uyyavandal after having Araicurrudayan Periyavudaiyan as their guardian and witness. The land house site measuring one **Veli#** and half **Kani*** and fraction was given earlier as **Stridhana** to Uyyavandal, who was given in marriage to Kotturudayan Arayar alias Vicaiyagangan.[50] So the women were associated with the execution of specific social customs. It was also a customary practice to include the name of the ladies in the sale proceeds of the lands to avoid future complications in the claims.

5.3 TALI*

The term **talipputtu** available in the vilwanathaswamy temple at Thiruvaikavur bearing the date the 33rd regnal year (1211 A.D.) of Kulothunga III (1178 to 1217/18 A.D.) indicates, the existence of the tradition and customary practice of wearing a **tali** for having a lady to be the life partner by a man.[51] Thus it is evident that it was a

[49] 118 of 1926

#&* 5 Kani 1 veli Kani in modern terminology means an area of land measuring 100 Kuli (0.33 acres) (Textiles and weavers in South India, Vijaya Ramasamy, Oxford, p.50)

[50] 67 of 1914

[51] 57 of 1914

* S.I.I. Vol XXIII, No.46 (A.R.No.46 of 1907) informs about the donation of tali (auspicious ornament) to Goddess at Tiruvisanallur, Tanjore Dt. This reflects the customary practice of wearning tali by woman. This Donation by the Queen of Pandya at Chola Nadu is Notetionthy.

customany practice to have a **talipputtu piramanam** (a deed of marriage) at times of marriages as a form of registration of the marriage.

5.4 SATI

The practice of Sati was prevalent in the Tamil country from the Sangam period. It denotes the death of a woman on her husband's funeral pyre. In general discussion it is an act of self-immolation. Generally it was in vogue in India. The Greek author Diodorus Siculus mentioned in his history of Punjab, about 'Sati Stones' (memorials to women who died in this way) may be found all over India, dating from as early as 510 CE. During the Muslim, Rule in India. Rajput practice this custom of 'Sati A the same time, several attempts were made to abolish this practice in many regimes, from the ancient time itself.

It ancient custom this was practiced to keep the chastity by chaste women. Another reason is that widowhood is very hard and bitter in those days. However the modern feminist writers denounce this practice as a 'Sado-ritual', evidence of patriarchal atrocities against women. However the idea of Sati is the apparent agent of her own destruction. It can arise only in a male-dominated and women - demeaning society.

The common people also adopted the custom of **Sati**.[52] Some times the sacred **tali** of the queens were captured and they were used to make golden ornaments.[53] It was a tradition of treating women as a property during the Chola period. The custom of **Sati** was also prevalent among women.

Sati was practiced here and there and it has come to be known from a **Sati** stone available near Poomalaippatty of Tiruchuliyal. However it informs that Rudra, the daughter of Ellappa Asari constructed a **malaikoil** in that place.[54] the Elavanasur

[52] A.R.E 363 of 1959.60.
[53] **Pudukkottai State Inscriptions.**, 458.
[54] 223 of 2005

inscription available in the Gramarodhanatha temple of that place mentions that a **Vēlaikkari*** called Devapperumal pointed out that if anybody prevented her from falling into the funeral fire of her husband (Committing **Sati**), it should be treated as if they had given their wives to the enemies.[55]

An inscription dated 1703-04 available in the Ovamaial temple at Mallapuram reveals the continuation of the tradition of self immolation by women even in the eighteenth century. It was also a customary practice to record the events mentioned in the literature. The above mentioned inscription reveals that the **sati** committed by Veerarakkamal wife of Mallapuram Sivan Chinnappa Reddiar is already mentioned in **Madurai Tala Purānam.**[56]

The queens too had adopted the tradition of Sati or self **immolation**[$].Though the kings, chieftains and wealthy people indulged in plurality, undoubtedly the monogamous family was the general orders among the common public. Though polygamy was known, polyandry was not at all practiced.

5.5 UNTOUCHABILITY

By using the name of the women of the degraded nature of the castes are also revealed. The high caste people always avoided to give their daughters in marriage to low caste people. They refused to give their daughters to the **pariah** who gathers grass for the horse.[57] As a punishment the accused repented that for his deeds he will carry the chapal of the **Chakkili** and will take **tāmbulam** from him.[58] Thus having contact with low class people was considered a despicable act.

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[55] 156 of 1906
* Women Servant
[56] 242 of 2003
[$] According to sanscrit inscription, known as Tiruvalangadu plates, Vanaranmadevi, the devoted queen of Sundara Chola committed Sati on the death of her husband. A Tamil inscription of Raja Raja I also records. This act of vanavanmadevi (ARE, 236 of 1902)
[57] **Ibid.,** Vol, VII, No.118
[58] **Ibid.,** No.86

5.6 INTERCASTE MARRIAGES

There prevailed the system of intercaste marriages in the then Tamil society. An inscription available in the temple of Perumukkai indicates that the women of royal family and Vaisya clan married a Vaisya man and Brahmin respectively. Mixed caste marriage system in Tamilnadu was sprung up during the 12th century.[59] They too were philanthropists. When the gifts of cloth offered by them for the flag for the Mukyalewara temple of Perumukkai it is evident that marriages did not stand in their way of religious piety and grant of donations. They were always pious and dedicated to the execution of their religions studies.

5.7 HERO STONE*

Even for the memory of a dead servant maid it was a custom to install a hero stone. A hero stone available near the Murugappan temple at Maharajakkadai bearing the inscription of Eyinadalvan installed in memory of Meenal wife of Mambedayar[60] will testify to that. While a man died out of snake bite and when his wife committed Sati it was a custom to venerate her chastity by the erection of a hero stone. An inscription in the herostone available at Veeranan Kollai of Mottur it is revealed that ten people had venerated Vichchikan, a lady who commited Sati due to the death of her husband by snake bite. This was a way of offering their veneration to a heroic and chaste lady.[61] Anyhow the society never hesitated to glorify the venerable deeds of women. In a hero stone available at Kathadikuppam of Krishnagiri district reveals that ladies even venerated an individual called Somira pichi who killed himself by falling into the fire.[62] The women were devoting much attention to the various occurances arround them.There were marriages between the lower and upper caste men and women.

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[59] 110 of 1992
[60] 125 of 1973
* It is known as Nadukal stone planted to mark the spot of a hero's death.
[61] 108 of 1973
[62] 131 of 1973

In the same way many refereces are seen as calling the women as Sani. It was a respectable term used to indicate the high caste Brahmin ladies (example Padmasani, Kulasani). As seen carlier the names such as Perundevi Sani, Alappirautal Sani, NelkuthirAudal Sani etc., also will attest the above fact. They too donated lands, sheep, houses etc for the temples.

Nangai Sani the daughter of Banmakkara Bhattan too had a share in the **Kani** obtained by her father who was a temple priest of the Tirukkolili Udayar of Tirukkuvalai. The inscription is dated the 19th regnal year (1184 A.D.) Rajadhi Raja II (1166-1182 A.D.).[63]

5.8 VENERATION TO COMMON WOMEN

The 25th regnal year (911 A.D.) record of Parantaka Vira Narayana (886-905 A.D.), the ruler who regarded women members mentions that the Pāndya ruler on the basis of the request of Nārayanan-Kesavan, a confident officer, redefined the donations and granted it to him.[64]

Due to the regard and reverence shown to the mother and elder sister, one Yalagan reclaimed his fallow land and donated that as **Devadanam** to the Meganatha Samy temple of Tirumechur in the name of his mother and elder sister on the seventh regnal year (914 A.D.) of Parantaka I (907-955 A.D.).[65]

During the reign period of Rāja Rāja I (985-1014 A.D.) in his 20th regnal (1005 A.D.) for the welfare of the mother Manchavi and father Parusadevar their son Someswaradevar made arrangements for the burning of a lamp in the temple at Thirukkoharnam.[66] Such facts indicate the son's veneration towards his parents.

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[63] 251 of 1930-31.
[64] A.R.E No.1959 No.14
[65] 282 of 1950
[66] **Pudukottai State Inscriptions.** 183

As the women were venerated, the statues of the women of laudable qualities were installed in the temples. In the Chennakesava Perumal temple of Mallanginar there is a statue of a lady bearing the name Sennakkammal **magal** (daughter) Subbammal.[67] In the same place there is another statue bearing the name Subbammal wife of P. Alagiri of Kambalathar community.[68] These two statues might of the same women Subbammal. This tradition continued to survive even in the 19th century and it could be seen in the later part of this discussion. These facts reveal that women of different communities were given reverence for their charitable acts and that enhanced their status in the society.

Even grants were announced in memory of ladies. The Valluvankottai Jain palli inscription, an unpublished one, informs that the Puhalangudiyan of Kilmangalam when announced a grant of fifty sheep to the Arutunai Perum Palli, it was informed that this announcement was made in memory of his wife Kaliyan moli.[69] Due recognition was made to women with regard to their religious pursuits.

The seventh year (914 A.D.) inscription of Parantaka I's (907 to 955 A.D.) is available in the Meganatha Temple of Tirumeichur and it reveals that a private individual called Yalagon after the reclamation of a fallow land into a cultivable one had donated that in the name of his mother and elder sister to the private individuals. Such an act reveals that even women were offered recognition due to their involvement in public activities.[70] The respect and veneration assigned to women enabled the donars to announce grants in the name of the ladies and also for their welfare.

The women who sang the sacred songs in the temples were highly venerated by the temple dancers. They were even given prizes for their recitations, from **Jaiminiya Śamavēda** by individuals from the accrued interest amount of the deposits made by them.

[67] 263 of 2005
[68] 264 of 2005
[69] M. Senthil Selvakumaran, "Vallavan Kottai Samanappalli Kalvettukkal," **Kalvettu,** 71 July 2006, pp.19-20.
[70] 282 of 1950

At Kottaru of Kanyakumari district in a statue of a lady available at the Gurumadam of that place the name mentioned is **Ananjapērumal Śwarupam**[71] and that attests that even the ladies dead and gone were duly venerated by the existing members of the family even by the eraction of a statue to honour them.

Kulasekara Pāndya's (1268-1308 A.D.) 32nd regnal year inscription (1300 A.D.) reveals that the king was kind enough to donate an **iraiyili*** land to one Avudai Nachchiyar's mother Dhinnandal due to the death of the former.[72] Such facts suggest the reverence shown by the ruler to the dead and gone.

Even mutts were built in the name of ladies and a lady called Manu Vilanga Pillayperral offered 4000 Kasus for the construction of a mutt This previlege was assigned to a lady is revealed by the 5th regnal year (1251 A.D.) of Rājēndra III (1246-1279 A.D.). This act was approved and directed by the ruler himself through his administrative officials. So the social status of women was a recognised one.[73]

The 10th regnal year (1261 A.D.) record to Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I (1251–1268 A.D.), pinpoints that woman were given greater veneration and as their husbands were included in the enquiry committee appointed by the ruler they were venerated.[74]

When Komaramalai another lady died on 9th July 1910 she was also buried and a tomb was built.[75] On 29th December 1890 when Ambambabai died a tomb was constructed for her.[76] The same tradition continued even when Deepanbabai,[77] Kamatchi Ambabai[78] died. Even after their death tomb was constructed for Annsambabai.[79] Thus the women also served as causes for the introductionof customary practices.

[71] 451 of 2004
[72] **Pudukottai State Inscriptions.**, 410.
* Tax-free land. Exempt from Govt.Taxes
[73] 278 of 1923
[74] S.I.I. Vol, XXIV, Nos.203 and 257
[75] 9 of 1974
[76] 10 of 1979
[77] 11 of 1979
[78] 12 of 1979
[79] 14 of 1979

To assist the people to take oath during the Chitra festival and Thiruvathirai in the name of Pāśur Nangaiyar the tank called Athanipperi was made as a tax free gift by the donor bymaking the payment.[80] The women were also included in the sale of land.[81] The women too served as possessors of the lands of the temples.[82]

Due to the veneration offered to their masters all the acts were executed only in the name of the queen.[83] Another fifth regnal year (961 A.D.) record of the same ruler Aditya II records the sale of land for 85 **Kalānju pon*** by the **Śabhā*** of Kudamukku on behalf of Periyan Tirubhuvana Sundari, the palace servant maid. The grant was made to feed one sage at the temple of Teinkkil Kottam Paramasevamy.[84] It should be noted that the philanthropic activities of the servant maids were of different kinds. As mentioned in this inscription the servant maid had transacted her land for feeding a sage, which was a charitable deed. Anyhow they too enjoyed the privilege of announcing grants.

5.9 WOMEN AND WELFARE ACTIVITIES

It is also mentioned in an inscription that there was an irrigation canal in the name called Śembiyan Mādēvi Vaykkal.[85] While this stands to prove the philanthropic and welfare activities of the queen Śembiyan Mādēvi it also reveals the veneration assigned to the generous Chola queen. It is attested even by the arrangements made by her son Uthama Chola (970-985 A.D.).[86]

Since the queens were fond of their husbands, they were all interested in maintaining the ancestral worship for achieving their ends. The images of the

[80] **Pudukottai State Inscriptions.,** 90.
[81] **Ibid.,** 97.
[82] **Ibid.,** 98, 99, 108, 110, 111, 113, 114 etc.
[83] **Mysore Archaeological Report,** 1911, p.38 and 226 of 1911
* It means a gold coin current in olden days; also the equivalent weight
[84] 225/1911
* local assembly of a brahmana village; also referred to as Kuri in inscriptions.
[85] S.I.I. Vol.XIX, No.379.
[86] **Ibid.,** No.311.

ancestors were installed in the temples. Sundara Chōla's (Parantaka II) daughter Kundavi installed a statue of her father in the Tanjore temple and announced grants for that also.[87] Ulagamadevi wife of Raja Raja, the great, installed the image of her husband.[88] The queens were highly venerated. Sembiyan Madevi wife of Gandaradhita was a venerable lady. Her image was installed in a temple and arrangements were made for the regular daily rituals.[89] Rajendra Chōla's wife Cholamadevi too had such recognition.[90]

During the time of Raja Raja, the great's 13th regnal year (998 A.D.) Śembiyan Mādēvi had even written a letter to the Sabha of Thinkkodikka to grant lands for agricultural activities to the three servants of the temple called Thirukkodikka Udayar temple.[91]

Two female nursing attendants were given four nalis and ½ **Kāśu*** each.(FN.125)

Kulottunga I's (1071-1122 A.D.) 40th regnal year inscription mentions that queen Kambadēvi established a city called Kambadevi Nallur measuring 80 veli land and with the approval of the ruler she was able to removed the taxes by offering 300 Kalam paddy. From the statement unable in the inscription it is revealed that she had gained wealth by Dharma and had made them as the public welfare property. She had even hailed those who had protected that.

An inscription dated 1541 A.D. available in the stone tub located in a garden at Salappatty informs that Erumai Ammal wife of Erutta Reddiyar refers to the fact that she herself donated that stone tub. This reveals that the women to gain peace issued grants for watering even to help the sheep.[92] It is also worth to note here that

[87] **Ibid.** Vol. II No.6
[88] **Ibid.,** No.38
[89] 481 of 1925
[90] **Archaeological Report on Epigraphy,** 1925, p.12
[91] **S.I.I Vol.XIX** No.292
[92] **Kalvettu,** 68 October 2005, p.37
* Kasu is a measure of weight equal to 1/4 palam

the women ware capable of imprinting their name for making permanancy of their noble deeds.

The inscription bearing the date 1917 available at Gangaikōnda Cholapuram informs that a choultry was constructed by Manikkathammal daughter of obaiyur Muruga Chettiyar and wife of Kumarasamy chettiyar.[93] Thus the women as a continuous tradition even in the 20th century were interested in executing philanthropic activities of welfare nature to the common public uninterruptedly.

Ramalakshmi established a load bearing stone called as sumaithangi during Kollam era 918 (1743 A.D.)[94] An inscription available in the Padmanabhapuram Government Museum dated Kollam era 957 i.e., 1782 A.D. mentions about the donation of land by Adhikkutty of Mechchery.[95] As the women were known for their generosity, Karkachchi wife of Kongarayar Kallappeuman of Kalattur assisted the construction of a tumbu (sluice) in the Kalattur tank for the welfare of the public.[96] and it was used for irrigation purpose also.

It was also a tradition prevailed and according to that Godhavari Devi, a private lady made arrangements for the preparation for a feast at the time of the marriage of Maharaya's daughter called Sri Bhuwaneswari Devi.[97]

There were **adula salais** or free hosipitals established by Queens such as Kundavai and that offered employement opportunities to two nurses.[98]

It was another customany practice of the Tamil women of specific communities to offer donations for the construction of steps in the irrigation canals for the benefit of watering the public and welfare of the cattle. The Keelakkallur unpublished

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[93] **Ibid.**, 66 April, 2005, p.11
[94] 537 of 2004
[95] 595 of 2004
[96] 1 of 1989
[97] 797 of 1922
[98] 182 of 1915

inscription attests this fact. The inscription dated in kollam era 1060 (1891 A.D.) states that a lady called Pulavidayammal, daughter of Dhiraviyam Pillai and wife of Nayinar Pillai had contributed the steps.[99]

During the 32nd regnal year (1050 A.D) of Rajadhi Raja I (1018-1054 A.D), his wife Madhava Vasugiyar at three installments had purchased land at the rate of 40, 45 and 110 Kasus from the Sabayor of Thirukkarugavur and offered those lands for laying roads and also for feeding five Brahmins twice in a day. The queen in collaboration with the Mahasabayor had granted that and those acts attest the role of queen in multifarious economic activities.[100]

The Kongu chieftain Kallapperumanar's wife Kongachchi too had donated an outlet of water from the tank called tumbu at Kongarai in her own risk.[101] Thus women too devoted to welfare activities

5.10 WOMEN'S PROPERTY RIGHTS

As the women had property rights the properties of the husbands and father were all partitioned even among women. The partition deed was generally called **Kurrolai.** They even served as servant maids in the palaces and enjoyed the right to sell their lands or to purchase lands to be transferred to temple. They involved in land transactions. The women always stood for justice.

Manedanangandi, the Thanjavur Karralipirattiyar and Velattu pendatti had offered 20 kasus to the Perumakkal of the Nageswarasamy temple. The amount was to be used to purchase land for the watter carrier who brought water from kaveri for bathing the primary deity of the temple.[102] Thus the women were also known for their generous activities.

[99] S. Ulagaiah, "Keelakkallur Steps Inscription" **Kalvettu,** 73 January, 2007, Chennai, pp.35-36
[100] 4 of 1995
[101] 1 of 1999
[102] **S.I.I.** Vol, XIX, No.131.

During the reign period of Rajendra I (1012-1044) in his 20th regnal year (1032 A.D.) the Chola king had announced a particular land as an **irayili** or tax free land after receiving 170 Kasu from one Kalyana Madeviyar. Thus the women were able to transact facts pertaining to temple. This Iravadeswarar temple inscription of Thiukkottaram testifies to the recognition granted by the Chola monarchs in involving women also in administrative measures.[103]

The mentioning of the land as the boundary was also in vogue and in that respect the land of **Talaikkoli*** is treated as a boundary land.[104] An inscription available in the Airavadeswara temple at Thirukkōttaram reveals that a lady named Perumal Alavandanachchi had sold her land through Payedai Therudayan Thevan Kandan, her sister's son.[105] This too enables one to note that the women possessed lands and by adoption of specific traditional measures they had disposed them off with the support of the male members of the family. Such was the freedom of the women during the early days

Rājadhirāja I's (1018-1054 A.D.) 33 regnal year (1051 A.D.) inscription available at the Thiruvanjiyam temple too records the remission of taxes granted by the assembly of Abhimanabhusana Chathurvedimangalam on the lands endowed by Brammagal, wife of the Chola general Rajendra Chola Brahmmaroyar for offerings to the God. This too testifies to the possession of the landed properties enjoyed by the women of the officials of the Chola rulers and the veneration offered by the rulers to them for their charitable activities.[106] Such facts also reveal that there prevailed no disparity in possessing properties and announcing grants. Officials and women were not at all exempted.

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[103] 389/1978
[104] 158 of 1956-67
* dancing women adept in her profession
[105] 384 of 1978
[106] 234 of 1938-39

The same Kambadevi w/o of kulothunga I and another queen Chola Kula Valli had purchased lands and made all arrangements for cultivating those lands with proper irrigation facilities. They were also treated as tax free lands. Such facts expose the position entrusted to the queens who were so specific and particular in exposing.[107]

The Suvarnapuri temple inscription dated the 21st regnal year of Raja Raja II (1146-1173) refers to the sale of land by the priest of the temple namely Bhamodara Bhattar. His brothers and his mother Periyandan Sharni too had signed the sale deed of the land.[108] It is obvious that the women during the Chola period, through did not have any property rights, had stood as witness in the land transactions and that even enable one to notice the faith and belief maintained over the women. Further they were not at all prevented from engaging in any charitable activities.

The second regnal year inscription (1180 A.D.) of Kulothunga III (1178-1217/18 A.D.) deals with a gift offered by a lady by name Velanperratiru, second wife of Milatturudaiyan Ariyan Subapariyar alias Valavettaraiyar. After the death of the person mentioned later his property was divided by his sons born to both his wives. The second wife refered earlier too received her share. She gifted her share to the temple of Thiru vakkattiyuramudaya Mahadever. As she was a lady she had made her brother in law called Milatturudayan Araiyan Porkari alias Velavakkonar as her gurdian and witness.[109] This too attests the social condition of women in the common society. This deed of partition of property is known as **kurrolai** or the deed which refers to the fact that all land transactions were registered duly. It indicates that even the wife had a property right over the properties of her husband after the demise of the husband. She had obtained her due share.

Due to their economic rights and privileges a lady servant called Urmabhattaraki alias Tirumvodi Royeri pledged a land for amount of 16 kalanju pon.[110] A lady called

[107] 39 of 1921
[108] 127 of 1927
[109] 30 of 1910
[110] 134 of 1926 and S.I.I. Vol. XIX, No.266

Paladevan Ilangai Sani had purchased a land for 24 ¼ kalanju pon from Srikarana Pitchan.[111] Even a private individual called Kuthapiran Bhattan along with his mother sold a land and registered it on the 32nd regnal year (1210 A.D.) of Kulottunga III (1778-1228 A.D.). It was sold to the temple and on behalf of the seller and his mother the temple's Adhi Sandeswara Deva Kanmigal, Sri Karyam Ceyvor and Sriparameswara Kankavikaryam Ceyvor were the receipients.[112] Likewise Arayan Samundi w/o Panayur Mulananda Nayagar and daughter of Pamayon Nattu Anangur Udayan Gurukula Raya had sold the land to the Adhi Sandeswara temple.[113] As seen earlier when Dakshinamuthy Bhattan son of Dhamodara Bhattan Abhisiddhan too sold his land at Jayasimha Kulakala Nallur the transaction was carried out by his mother Periyandal Sani and brothers. Thus it was a tradition of selling a landed property by all the members of the family including women.[114] It also indicates the unique tradition adopted in maintaining economic rights.

In the same way, another record of the same ruler Kulothunga III (1178 to 1217/18 A.D.) of the same year ie. his 33rd regnal year (1211 A.D.) had been announced the record that the registration of the sale of land by one lady by name Antappulapperumal and her daughter by name Uyyavandal after having Araicurrudayan Periyavudaiyan as their guardian and witness. The land house site measuring one Veli and half Kani and fraction was given earlier as Stridhana to Uyyavandal, who was given in marriage to Kotturudayan Arayar alias Vicaiyagangan.[115] So the women were associated with the execution of specific social customs. It was also a customary practice to include the name of the ladies in the sale proceeds of the lands to avoid future complications in the claims.

During Kulottunga Chola III's (1178-1218 A.D.) period, an inscription available as the Udharapadeeswara temple at Thiruchengattangudi informs that a lady called

[111] 147 of 1926 and S.I.I. Vol. XIX No.355
[112] 121 of 1927
[113] 126 of 1927
[114] 127 of 1927
[115] 67 of 1914

Brahmmani Alliyan Kothai had purchased lands from 20 persons and had granted them to widen the car street of that place. As it is mentioned that this transaction was approved by the officials and attested by their signatures one could estimate the value of the activiites of women, who had the privilege of possessive rights to transact lands individually for the public welfare activities with the support of the officials of the state.[116] Another inscription of the same Chola monarch Kulottanga III refers to the request made by Brahmmani Alliyan Kottai and others to the ruler to remove the so called Andharayam and Battam to the lands donated to the Udharapadeeswara temple of Tiruchengattangudi.[117] This too exposes the involvement of women in political and philanthropic activities. Due to their attachment to devotionalism they had engaged themselves in various appreciable acts.

Kulottunga Cholas 33rd regnal year (1211 A.D.) inscription available in the Vilvanathaswamy temple records the sale of land to the temple of Thiruvaikkavur Udayar by one lady Antapulapperumal and her daughter called Uyyavandal Cerapandiyan Tainpirayamukkan, brother of Antapulapperumal was their guardian and assisted them in executing their services. The land and house site measuring one Veli and half Kani and fraction were given earlier as Stridhana to Uyyavandal, who was the wife of Kottundaiyan Araiyan Nagariswaramudayan. The land tax, due for ten Pasanams could not be remitted by them. So they sold the land for 28,800 Kasus and the house site for 21,600 Kasus to the temple as Tirunamathukani and settled the tax dues.[118] So it is evident that the **women during the Chola period were not exempted from paying the taxes.** They were having constant touch with various aspects of life and were also law abiding. They carried out their duties even by selling their properties. Such aspects were even recorded in the form of documents. The same transaction and the activities are attested by another inscription of the same place.[119]

[116] 66 of 1913
[117] 68 of 1913
[118] 60 of 1914
[119] 58 of 1914

The women, as they had property rights they made even arrangements to exchange their lands. For instance as stated by the Kalavannapperumal temple inscription of Sikkal as the lands belonging to the above said temple were located at a long distance, the lands around the tank and called as Nallampillaipperral eri were exchanged.[120]

Another record of the same of temple registers the sale of lands by the members of the same family including women such as Sagadana Saukara Narayani daughter of Manthai Perunkanna and Keelakkadaya Ninral his wife, had registered the sale of the land to the Vellai Pillayar of the temple already mentioned earlier. The total amount obtained through the sales was shared among themselves as per the quantum of land which was available under their custody. The amount obtained by them was 28,000 kasus.[121] So it is evident that women to had property rights only at a later date.

During the second regnal year (1218 A.D.) of Raja Raja III (1216-1260, A.D.) along with the officials of Palanellurudayan called Thiruvenkadudayan and Kolarudayan called Ambalavan along with the wife of the former called Vaippudayal Andavan Perumal engaged in the sale transaction of a land and the involvement of women of the officials should be noticed.[122] Such aspect will expose the role of women in multidimensional activities.

A fourth regnal year (1220 A.D.) inscription of the Chola ruler Raja Raja III (1216-1260 A.D.) registers the sale of land as Thirunamathukkani the already donated land to the Vellai Pillayar temple by Uyyakkondal wife of Alavandan Bhattan.[123] In the same way another lady called Miral Sani, a Brahmin lady, wife of Ahila Nayaga Bhattan, by keeping her father as guardian had sold her land as Thirumanathukani for 24,000

[120] 100 of 1911
[121] 199 of 1978
[122] 572/1977
[123] 210 of 1978

kasus to the Vellappillayar in the temple of Thiruvalanchuli udayar.[124] In the same temple there is another inscription which states that a Brahmin lady had sold a house site land of 13 ½ **Kulis** to the Vellapppillayar shrine for 370 kasus.[125] This transaction was executed under the guardianship of the brother of that lady. One lady called Kondalsathi and her son called Chottai Bhatta Nambhi Bhattan had sold their land to the Vellappilayar of the same temple at the cost of 11,000 kasus.[126] These facts reveal that women were so fond of the Vellapillayar of Thiruvalanjuli and they unhesitatingly donated lands to that deity. As they had landed possessions they had the right to dispose of them by sale by keeping the members of their family as guardians. It is also worth to note here that lands were purchased in the name of anniya namam, which means the land purchased from the person other than the owner. This was also registered as per the sale deed called Annija Namakarana Theettu.[127]

The eighth regnal year (1224 A.D.) inscription of Raja Raja III (1216-1210) records the sale of a land by a lady called Alliyan Kothaisani, wife of Karamili Settu Singhapiran Bhattan, by keeping her son-in-law Kottula Bhattan Sivadhavana Vasippattanai as guardian. She had sold her ½ **Kani** land to 800 **kasus**.[128] Thus women had every right to transact her lands.

An inscription belonging to the 18th regnal year (1234 A.D.) of Raja Raja III (1216-1260 A.D.), though narrates the contribution of house to devotees it suggests the possessive right of a house by a women.[129] The 24th regnal year (1240 A.D.) inscription of the same ruler too indicates the residential area possessed by the wife of Varahabhattan Brahmin.[130]

[124] 219 of 1978
[125] 224 of 1978
[126] 229 of 1978
[127] 237 of 1978
[128] 203 of 1998
[129] 70 of 1911
[130] 66 of 1911

The women engaged themselves in maintaining the rightful claims of the elders of the family. The 25th regnal year (1240 A.D.) of Rajakesari Raja Raja III (1216-126 A.D.) stands testimony to the fact that Manreru Samratty, the wife of Devaradiyar wife of Isanadevar, the head of a mutt, appealed to the temple authorities that due to the death of her husband lands should be granted to Dhanattar Esana Siva, who was the Setta Mudaliyar the elder brother. Thus the women enjoyed the right to fight for justice even with the Dhanattars of the temple.[131]

During the reign period of Rajendra III (1246-1279 A.D.) the land transactions arranged in the name of women were executed by keeping some witnesses.[132] The same inscription reveals that even women possessed landed properties of their own. For instance the land of Vanjiyandal Saniyar wife of Sirama Bhattan is shown as a demarcating boundary for another land sold.

The 11th year (1252 A.D.) inscription of Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I (1251-1268 A.D.) available in the Thiruvanchinatha temple of Theiruvanjiyam reveals the sale of one veli land of Anangichani, wife of Manavaba Bhattan too indicates that the government acknowledged and approved the sale arranged by women. It is worth to note that as Anangichani was a widow, the sale transaction was carried out by the son Sridhara Bhattan, who was the guardian of his mother.[133] Such facts also stand to prove that the women were enjoying the right to possess the lands and properties and also had the right to transact them with the approval of the public authorities with the support of their successors.

The financial as well as land transactions made as donations for religious purposes by women was a privilege existed then. This was executed with the involvement and approval of the government officials. The 15th regnal year (1261 A.D.) inscription of Rajendra III (1246-1279 A.D.) available at Sedapureeswara temple

[131] 49 of 1911
[132] 402 of 1908
[133] 69 of 1911

at Tiruppampuram also indicates that Sokkandal Sani a Devaradiyar after getting 2000 **Kasus** sold six ma of her land to the temple. Her son Tirucherai Ninran Bhattan stood as witness for the transactions executed by his mother as guardian. As per the orders of the state the Devakanmigal, the administrators of the temple received it. So it is obvious that during the Chola period the Devaradiyars appointed by the state in the temple were enjoying the economic oriented financial rights.[134]

The women, as they had property rights, had even the right to sell the lands of their mothers. During the 11th regnal year of (1262 A.D.) of Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I (1251-1268 A.D.) one Anangichami had sold her mother's one Veli land to the Devakanmis of the Thiruvalinatha temple. The Anangichami was the wife of Manavala Bhattan of Rajagambira Chatturvedimangalam. These lands were her property assigned to her as Śtrithanam (maintenance) and Śamskara Dakshina. The sale transaction was executed by Sridhara Bhattan, her son.[135]

Another Pandya inscription available at the Perumal temple of Pattur in Nannilam Taluk indicates that even a lady servant called Tiruppari Ammai along with others signed as witness in a case relating to land transactions. As she is treated on par with the Ursabayar, Sthanathar and others one can infer the recognised political position assigned to women.[136] Thus they enjoyed a venerable position.

As directed by Vira Pandya, at the request of the urar of Alathur of Urrathur Kurram, he granted permission to them to sell the lands to the Devaradiyars of the temple of Thirumalaikkunramudayar.[137] The income from those lands was to be used for the execution of rituals in that temple. Further an undated inscription of the Sigamanathaswamy temple gives us the detail that the wives of the soldiers had offered as word and that reveals the political contact of women.[138]

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[134] 88 of 1911
[135] 69 of 1911
[136] 192 of 1977
[137] **Pudukottai State Inscriptions** 666.
[138] **Ibid.**, 679.

Kuthan Adaikkalathal, wife of Arinjigayan Divahara Bhattan, the Priest of the Mullaivananatha temple of Thirukkarugavur also undertook a land transaction. She sold lands by keeping Bharadayan Bhattan Janardhanan as witness. Such facts reveal that women of different calibres were engaged in the specific philanthropic activities.[139]

Another inscription of the same ruler Parakrama Pandya's (1479-1499 A.D.) 12th regnal (1491 A.D.) reveals that the boundaries demarcated for the land mention about Ariyal Vaykkal*, Nalla Pillai Perral Nangai land etc., and they stand testimony to the privileges enjoyed by women with the support of the government.[140]

The study of women in society enables to arrive some conclusions. Although Tamil Society was patriachal, the women of medieval period were able to maintain their honour and social status by involving in various charitable as well as welfare activities. There prevailed few code of conducts relating to their marriage, Stridhanam and Sati. However comparatively in the medieval period they enjoyed more freedom and rights.

[139] 7 of 1995

* Channel, Canal

[140] **Pudukottai State Inscriptions.** 460.

CHAPTER VI

WOMEN IN RELIGION

Chapter VI

WOMEN IN RELIGION

Tamilagam of this period reflects major religious varient and complex form of religious mosaic. The late Sangam and post Sangam Literary works of the fourth, sixth centuries introduce a new milieu to Tamil religion and worship, marking a change from Ecozone nature landscape of the Sangam Literary works to the Temple or sacred landscape of the bhakthi hymns.

An attempt is made in this chapter to focus on the women's capabilities and pious nature and their philanthrophic attitude in respect of their involvement in construction, reconstruction, renovation of temples and donations for various sacred purposes which are pertaing to religious service. These activities refer to their role in the domain of religion.

The Inscriptions provide the names of Queens and other women with authenticated records about their religious involvement and activities related to temples and other ritual performances. These activities include construction and renovation of temples, setting up of images of gods, kings and queens, made grants, donations and gifts like golds, lands, ornaments, money and sheeps, establishment of charities. These activities and functions are precisely the reflection of their rights and position they held in the empire as well as society.

The inscriptions and copper plates found in temples and related places, provide the names of the queens and other women who involved in such activities. These involvement also helps them for their integral and haromonious administration. By inscribing their activities in the inscriptions they feel prestige and express their magnanimity.

6.1 WOMEN IN RELIGION

Everywhere women are confined the domestic sphere often in some form of 'seclusion'; and they are excluded from formal religion, and from participating in important public rituals; men, on the other hand are prominent in religious organisation, they perform the important rituals, formulate dogma and hold. The pens that write the divinely inspired 'texts'. They control the powers of female productivity and dictate the social and cultural roles of women. If women provide the important images religious mythology and symbolism men manipulate these symbols.

Thus women exercised their rights and powers in the religious sphere rather than taking active part in politics, however which reflect their hold in politics also because without which they can't express their interest and benevolence and execute such plans. This point is strengthened by the view of K.A.Nilakanta Sastri. He says that "Gandarāditya, who with his queen Śembiyan-Māhadēvi claims a bigger place in the domain of religion than of politics".[1]

This description about the King with his queen Śembiyan-Māhadēvi spells out the close link between the domains of polities and Religion and they are able to perform the activities in the domain of Religion being the Kings and Queens. Most of the Chōḻas are Śaivites. Yet they serve the other religion also.

Sacred and charity activities were recorded abundantly in inscriptions especially during these centuries of Pallava, Pāndiya and Chola Kings. Even in the form of Meykirthi which was developed during chola period and spread to other kingdoms.

6.2 DONATION OF PALLI

The Tamil monarchs' queens played their role in the philanthropic activities by dealing with financial aspects. Their activities were confined to issue of grants to the

[1] K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, ***A History of South India***, (1999), p.163

temples. For instance during the sixth regnal year of **Tellāru Erintha Nandhivarman** (847-872 A.D.), in 853 A.D. a private lady called Madevi donated financial assistance for the renovation of a Jain **palli*** and also granted a well to the same **palli**. Thus the Pallava period witnessed a specific role of the queens

The **Brāhmī** inscription available in Pukalur reveals that the **palli** of the Jains of that place was the donation of the younger daughter of Pittan of Nalliyur.[2] The same fact is also revealed by another **Brāhmī** inscription of the same place numbered as 20.6. of Pukalur.[3] Likewise there is another **Brāhmī** inscription available in the Nehanurpatti of Thiruvannamalai District. That reveals the fact that Sekkanthi's mother called Sekkanthammai was responsible for the carving of the **palli.**[4] From the above facts it is easy to infer that even women had the right to issue grants for the carving of the rock cut caves at Perumpogal which could be identified as Perumuhai of to-day. It is worth to note such a pioneering efforts of women, enabled the future queens of different dynasties such as Pallavas, Pāndyas, Chōlas and others to execute similar activities in the future.

The pious ladies had contributed to the temples by their own individual efforts. A **vatteluthu** inscription available at the Kailasanathaswamy temple of Pallimadam suggests that a lady called Appi Singam had announced grants to **Thirukkāttampalli Kurandy,** a Jain school and abode (Probably a Preceptor) along with her father.[5] The religious toleration could be noticed by this, because that Jain **palli** was a popular one during the 8th and 9th centuries.[6] Though it was a period of the Bhakti movement it is worth to note that Jainism was a powerful religious when compared with Buddhism in the Tamil country. These things even suggest that women of different categories were always pious and devoted.

* Temple of a Jain Religion

[2] 343 and 344 of 1927-28.

[3] T.S. Sridhar (Ed), **Tamil Brahmi Inscriptions,** Department of Archaeology, Chennai, 2006. p.72

[4] **Ibid.,** pp.84-85.

[5] S.I.I. Vol. XIV No.32

[6] 428 A, 428 B of 1914, 431 of 1914

Even the Jain student called Kumanthangi Kunathiyar had granted gold and golden flower. Though they were the students of Arittanemi of Perayakkudi she had announced the grant in the 28th regnal year of Vikramaditya Varaguna of the Āy dynasty. The date specified is 913 A.D.[7] This inscription available at Chitral in the Kanyakumari District points out the political significance of even the religious oriented women students. It is evident that religion was seccndary to political activities.

As the women were given a venerable position Bholi Neelanchellan of Pongalūr for the welfare and happy life of his wife Kavanchathi and daughter Chellankanattu donated a threshold to the sanctum sanctorum of the Jain temple of Alathur.[8] In the Virasangatha Perumpalli one Cirrachal a renovation work was executed.[9] So it is evident that in the Kongu Chōla region the women had contributed to the devotional centers irrespective of religious considerations.

Even Jain girl students donated flower and gold to Tirucharanam Podarai.[10]

The 38th regnal year (945 A.D.) inscription of Parantaka I (907-955 A.D.) belonging to Vilappakkam of Perunthimisi nadu of Paduvur kottam states that one Pattini Kurathi Adigal, a female disciple of Arishtanēmi Bhattarar of Thiruppammalai in Vilappakkam donated a house site and a well which was excavated by her, for the newly formed Jain institution for lady monks (pen-palli) there. Like this an exclusive school for lady monks was existed in Vedal, where more than 300 students and lady teachers were staying.[11] This stands to prove the elevated position of women due to their economic and religious practices. Though no much details about the property rights of women are mentioned in inscriptions it is worth to note that they did not neglect the different charitable and devotional activities of women. Further it is obvious that even Jains had women scholars who were known for their educational pursuits.

[7] **Travancore Archaeological series,** Vol.I. pp.284-287 and Vol.II, p.125
[8] 594 of 1922
[9] **Ibid.,**
[10] **Trawancore State Areloeological series,** Vol I pp.287 and Vol.II p.125
[11] S.I.I. Vol, VII, No.56 and A.R.E. 1900 No.53

6.3 CONSTRUCTION OF TEMPLES / NANDAVANAM/MANDAPAS BY QUEENS

There are facts revealing that women members of the royal family prove to be devotional to the deities and due to that they have donated to the temples in some form or other and they were known for their piety and generosity.

Rangapathaka, the queen of Nandhivarman II (695-722 A.D.) alias Rajasimha Pallava dedicated the **Nityavinisvaragraham** in the Kailasanatha temple of Kanchipuram.[12] Rangapathaka's counterpart i.e., another wife of Rajasimha too carried out a similar act and that was available just nearer to that of Rangapathaka.[13]

The inscriptions of the Pallavas available in the Madras museum informs that Kali Akkan a lady of Alanchery constructed a temple and donated lands for providing neivedyam (food offereing to God) to construct a Nandavanam and to the conduct of Thiruvadhirai festival during theTamil month Chittirai.[14] This too testifies that the women enjoyed economic rights and privileges in the society.

It is also worth to note Bhudhi Āditha Pidāri, one of the four wives of Ariñjaya (956-957 A.D.), the brother of Gandarādhitha,[15] converted the Tiruchendurai Siva temple into a **Karrali**. By such measures the women members of the royal family prove to be devotional to the deities. Uthama chola too had many wives, namely Pattan thana thongi, malapadi thennavan Mādēvi, Vanavan Mādēvi, Viluparayan mahalar and Palvettarayan Mahalar. Due to the impact and influence of their mother in law, Śembiyan Māhādevi, all of them were pious and donated a lot to the temple constructed by her at Koneri Rajapuram. They too, due to their pious nature, made so many arrangements for the conduct of various festivals. These facts, in addition to the above statements regarding politics, also reveal that the women among the royal families were maintaining a cordial relationship and were able to adopt the same kind of activities for the welfare of the family.

[12] **Ibid.,** No.20.
[13] **Ibid.,** No.30.
[14] S. Krishnamoorthy, "Inscriptions of Madras Museum", **Kalvettu, Ibid.,** pp.29-30
[15] **S.I.I.** Vol.VI.No.31 and 32

Udaiyapirattiar Sembiyan Mahadeviyar alias Pirantakan - Mahadevadigatar, who had constructed the brick temples into **Karralis** had donated a silver vessel weighing 142 **Kalanju** to the temple of Manavaleswara at Thiru Velvikkudi.[16] Such an act even influenced the wives of officials to donate the required stones to the renovation of the temple and it is attested even by another inscription available in the same temple. Karaimalla Nangai, a wife of Viramarana Pallavaroyar, a state official had donated six stones for the temple to execute the renovation activities.[17]

Śembiyan Mādēvi mother of Uthama Chola (973-985 A.D.) and wife of Gandaraditya (949-57), who hailed from malavar family of Kollimalai region converted the brick temple of Thirukkodikkaval into a stone built one and ordered to collect all the scattered inscriptions available in the temple and to place them at the face of the **Vimana** of the sanctum sanctorum.

These facts reveal the pious nature of the queen's rights and privileges enjoyed by the queens. Śembiyan Mādēvi was a devoted and pious lady and even after the death of her husband she lived a long life up to 1001 (A.D). She was respected not only by the members of her family but also by the common public of the contemporary period of the Chola country.[18] Due to her gratitude and sense of devotion and dedication, she had carried out many charitable activities to various temples and converted many brick temples into **karralis** or stone structural temple and offered grants for the construction of many new temples.[19] She is mentioned as the Malavaroyar Mahalar Sri Gandaraditha Perumal Deviyar Śembiyan Mādēviyar,[20] in the Thiruvakkarai and Vriddhachalam inscriptions.[21] In memory of her husband she constructed the Siva temple called Gandarathitham at Koneri R̄ajapuram and there she installed the figure of Gandarādhitha in the form of worshipping Siva. Such was

[16] 496 of 1925
[17] 491 and 492 of 1925
[18] 128 of 1926
[19] 122 of 1926
[20] **S.I.I.**, XII, No.74 and 38 of 1931.
[21] T.P. Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai, **Sembiyan Madeviyar,** Bharathi Achchagam, Kumbakonam, 1953,p.15.

her devotion to her husband and deity. In addition to the above she had offered number of grants to that temple.[22] Being a devoted and widowed queen she concentrated on worship and spent her activities in pious deeds. Due to her free hand to execute many devotional activities she did a lot for the development of temple architecture in the Chola country. Her activities of conversion of the brick temples into stone structural temples could be seen in the temples available at places like Vriddhachalam,[23] Thriukkodikka,[24] Ten Kurangadudurai,[25] Tiruthuruthi[26] and Anangur.[27] Such facts about the contacts of Śembiyan Mādēvi with the temples[28] expose that the women of royal families were known for their devotion or bhakti and had the privilege of spending on temple construction, conversion and other philanthropic activities. Thus the position of Śembiyan Mādēvi indicates that even though she was a queen she was regarded as a wife and mother who dedicated herself for the devotional activities as well as art services.

Ulagamadevi alias that Thathi Sākthi Vidangi was the crowned queen of Raja Raja, the great (985-1014 A.D.) She constructed the **Ulagāmadēviswaram** shrine at the Ayyarappan temple of Tiruvayyaru.

There was also a customary practice to sell lands for the purpose of making a grove (Nandavanam) in the temple.(108) Sundariyar, daughter of Rajendra I established a Nandavanam (grove) called Ādavallan at the Thirukkarrali Māhādēver of Thirukkaruvur. By paying a sum of 15 **Kāśus** she made such an arrangement and the Nandhavanam was just situated near the temple.[29] Thus the women of the royal family enjoyed the privileges of offering donations to individuals for the execution of their religious pursuits.

[22] N. Subramanian, **History of Tamilnadu** (to A.D. 1336) Koodal Publishers, Madurai, 1976, p.182.
[23] S.I.I. Vol.III, No.141.
[24] 200 of 1904 and 48 of 1918
[25] S.I.I. Vol.III. No.146.
[26] 47 of 1918
[27] 36 of 1931
[28] S.I.I. Vol.III.No.144.
[29] 103 of 1926

Another fact attests the contribution of women to various temple and artistic activities. In the 39th regnal year (1110 A.D.) of Kulottunga I (1071-1122 A.D.), Kannudaya Piratti Perumal, the wife of the Chieftain of Ponnamaravathi constructed the Hardeertheswara temple at Thiruvarangulam.[30] This is yet another proof to exhibit the traits of women who were involved in various activities.

Due to the economic freedom, Kamudaya Pērumal Piratty Alvar, wife of Ponnamaravathy Nisbya Royar constructed the Alangudi Haradeetheswara temple. This is revealed by the 39 regnal year (1110 A.D.) inscription of Kulottunga I (1071-1122 A.D.)[31] All such facts expose the social activities carried out by women mostly blended acts of economic social and religious activities. It is worth to note that no customary practices about family life are narrated in the inscriptions.

Another inscription datable to 1215 A.D. of Kulōthunga III (1178-1217/18 A.D.) mentions the land offered to create a **Nandavanam** to the same temple by Devandayal, wife of Karuppulan Vaduganathan.[32]

The Pāndya queens were not an exception. They too were devoted and god fearing. Parantaka Vira Narāyana's wife Manabaranadēvi had made arrangements in the temples at Thillaithanam,[33] Tiruchorrudurai[34] etc., Srimaran Srivallabha's wife Kundavai Pirāttiyar has granted a golden chain to the deity of Thiruvisalur.[35] While the donations are referred to in the inscriptions, the name of the women donor is linked with the names of either their father or husbands. The terms Nangaichani, wife of Karumakarappattan[36] and Brahamma chani, daughter of Brabmana Sōmaśiyar of Brahammapuram[37] too had announced grants to the temples.

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[30] 75 of 1926
[31] **Kudanthai Inscriptions,** 84 of 1979
[32] 3 of 1995
[33] **S.I.I..,** Vol.V.No.583
[34] **Ibid.,** Vol.XIX.No.149
[35] **Ibid.,** Vol.XXIII, No.46
[36] **Ibid.,** Vol. V, No.695.
[37] **Ibid.,** Vol. V, No.989.

6.4 CONSTRUCTIONS MADE BY COMMON WOMEN

Common women were having the opportunity to participate in the construction of a temple. One Karaimalla Nangai, wife of Vira Narayana pallavaroyar offered six stones for the construction of the Manavaleswara temple of Thiruvelvikkudi.[38] As the members of the **kaikkōlar*** community too have donated stones it is evident that the temples were constructed by the support rendered by the common public including women.[39]

There are ample inscriptions which reveal that the women had contributed to the establishment of the mutt. The Uttiramerur Vaikuntha Perumal inscription refers to the Sannai Sani's donation of land called pattavriddhi and arrangements were made for chanting verses and for becoming temple priests. Like this the Andar Mutt,[40] Ketharinathar mutt,[41] Sir Kalinadudayan Mutt,[42] the Thirunavukkarasadevar thirumadam[43] were also available then. They testify to the value of the mutts and the dedication shown to them by women.

Even mutts were built in the name of ladies and a lady called Manu Vilanga Pillayperral offered 4000 Kasus for the construction of a mutt.(25)

Valayi, daughter of the Dēvaradiyār Mulududayāl during a Monday gifted a statue of Thiruvathavurar i-e. Manickavāśagar.[44]

There are references about the other gifts made by women like the construction of pillars in the temples. On the pillar of the **Muhamandapa** of the Kalabaleswara temple dated 1231 A.D. it records a gift of a pillar by Mukkan Araci, wife of Mukkan Kurutan alias Nalaikonda chetti from Kallaimadai.[45] Like wise in the north wall of the

[38] 122 of 1926

[39] 26 of 1997

[40] **S.I.I.** Vo. VII, No.96

[41] **Ibid.,** No.108

[42] **Ibid.,** No.785

[43] **Ibid.,** Vol, VIII No.53

* lit. those who work with their hands) Warriors of renown; weavers; also a class of temple servants.

[44] **Pudukottai State Inscriptions. 913**

[45] 640 of 1922

sanctum sanctorum of the same temple dated 1286 A.D. there is a record about the gift of two **palamchalagai achu** by one Keri, wife of Annikalan, a member of the Korrantai dan of Vēllala community.[46] This too will expose the attention as shown by women to temple architecture.

Religion seems to offer little scope for challenging dominant ideologies. However, in Indian religious life women are regarded as important person and necessary for the continuance of the structure.

In the pillar of Kadathur Marudeesar temple, during the year 1267 A.D., a gift of the plaster pillar by Vellathi, the sister of Kovan Kovisaman Ceytan is recorded. It stands to prove the deep devotion of the women of that period in the maintenance and upkeep of the temples.[47] Another inscription which refers to the gift of a pillar by a lady called Changammel chokki[48] too will corroborate that fact. This could be further substantiated by the donation of a pillar by a lady called Udayan Dēvi of Vellala community.[49] A dancing girl called Chokki hailed from Kolumam too had contributed a pillar to the Marudeesar temple of Kadathur.[50] One Adhichan Udaichi had donated to the erection of a pillar at the madaippalli (kitchen) of the above referred temple.[51] One more dancing girl called Chokkan Vembi had donated a pillar and corbel to the same temple.[52] Such facts indicate that the women were so particular in offering their donations to the popular Marudeesar temple of Kadathur for its physical maintenance and upkeep. Further they were known for their artistic qualities also.

The women were the adherents of the habit of savings and the amount was to be used for the religious purposes. For instance the inscription dated 1906-07 available in the Aranganatha temple of Erode informs that Chinna Thayammal and

[46] 647 of 1922
[47] 13 of 2004
[48] 26 of 2004
[49] 45 of 2004
[50] 48 of 2004
[51] 55 of 2004
[52] 45 of 2004

Chennwammal respectively the wives of Venkata Nayakar and Rana Nayakar had spent that amount for spreading stones as pavements in the prakaras of the temple.[53] One Periyanmal Pōnga Goundachi of Kannakulam of Kilasilai had conducted renovations in the Pambalamkorar temple of Kilasilai of Erode.[54] The same lady along with the support of the Gounders such as Āthappa Gounder and Sengoda Gounder constructed a separate shrine for Pon Kulali Amman and also installed the Subrahmanya idol in a separate shrine in that temple.[55] Like that one Puliammai, wife of Sengali of Kurumpillardan of the hunter's community constructed the entrance of the Agasteeswara temple of Ahilandapuram.[56] Deivanai, the daughter of Manikki Vaddra Mudali of Sembhutha Kulam executed the renovation to the Kariya Kaliyamman temple of Udhiyur of Kangayam Taluk.[57] One Nayyāndi Gana Thampirattiyar, daughter of Avinashi Bhattan of Thingalur of Kurambu Nadu gifted the painted pillar and the corbel to the Jeyankonda Nathar temple of Nathakkadayār.[58]

The women did not lag behind in maintaining the staus of the temple. Nanjamal, daughter of Kandiya Gounder and wife of M. Ramasamy Gounder of Bavala gotra of Devanampalayam renovated the Mariamman temple of that place.[59] Even in 1714 A.D. itself Sivakami Ammal, wife of Chinniah Gounder of Odhalar clan of Koduvai constructed the northern side wall of Kurathuvasal.[60] Such facts stand to prove that the ladies belonging to various communities were all particular in the preservation of the temples by offering the needed money by way of gifts. This was a traditional approach of women.

To the Maniambalam Vinai Theertheeswara temple the women of that place had donated the planks for the threshold.[61]

[53] 1015 of 2004
[54] 285 of 1961
[55] 253 of 2004
[56] 243 of 1920
[57] 1034 of 2004
[58] 236 of 1920
[59] 920 of 2003
[60] 210 of 2004
[61] **Pudukottai State Inscriptions.**, 1048.

During the subsequent period, at the time of the Nayak rule in Tamilnadu, an inscription dated in Kali era as 4945 (1844 A.D.) available at the Śathurappan Mandapa at Periya Kollappatty is also a significant one in this regard. Ramasamy Kechchilappa Nāyaka was the Zamindar of Ettayapuram and his wife constructed a mandapa in that temple for the installation of the processional deity at times of festivals. Such facts too testify to the fact that the women who had a position in politics were mostly pious and had privileges to offer their donations to temples.

Muthayammal, wife of Ellappa Chettiyar, the salt merchant hailed from the Ilayan Maharishi Gotra from Bhavani covered the flag mast with copper plate through her representative Muthuchamy Chettiyar.[62] Such facts prove beyond doubt that the women were well aware of temple architecture.

An inscription in the Valampuri Vinayagar informs that one Valliammai daughter of Nagar Pillai had donated to the Vinayagar temple.[63] A lady had donated amounts for a pillar in the Sucindram Thānumalayan temple **Uñjal Mandapa.**[64] At Thakkalai Arumughathammal wife of Arumugam Pillai, the landlord constructed the Arumugha Vinayagar temple and the inscription bears the date **Kollam era** 1074 (1898 A.D.).[65]

Since the wives were all pious and dedicated, an inscription dated 1890 A.D. available at the Subrahmanya Swamy Temple of Palani informs that construction of the Dheertha mandapa by Nagammal wife of Tumbichchi Nāyaka.[66] Another inscription available in the pillar of the Kailasanatha temple at Thidiyan informs about the attachment of wife and sons towards the husband and father. According to the inscription already mentioned Meenakshi, wife of Nallaperumal Thevan along with her sons in memory of the Nalla Perumal Thevan installed the statue of that man in a pillar in that temple.[67] As it was a tradition to install the statues of the rulers and

[62] 108 of 2005
[63] 453 of 2004
[64] 472 of 2004
[65] 496 of 2004
[66] 262 of 2003
[67] 267 of 1964-1965

queens in the pillars during in Nāyak period, the same followed tradition continued even by women devotees. Due to the importance and recognition granted to women the statues of Lakshmi Ammal, Devakkal and Ayiśakkal are installed in the walls of the Kariyamalagar temple of Kundam.

An inscription dated June 1895, available at the Perumal temple of Kovilangulam, near Aruppukkottai states that a lady had constructed the temple.[68] Likewise Anandavalli and Alagu, the two doughters of Vaniyakutty Chetty had constructed two mandapas in front of the Kailasanatha temple of Palavanatham near Virudhunagar.[69]

Even in the 20th century, Amirtha Valliammal, wife of Kurubanai Iyangar, in the Ulagalantha Perumal temple of Kanchipuram erected shrines for Vishwasenar, Āndal and Manavālapperumal. This inscription is dated as 13, September 1908 and this is carved due to the efforts of her son Srinivasadasan.[70] Thus the entire family was confined to memorable charitable activities.

6.5 DONATION TO LIGHT THE PERPETUAL LAMP

During the reign period of the Chola monarch Aditya I (871-907 A.D.) the Thirumalapadi inscription[71] reveals that Ilankopitchi, the first wife and crowned queen of Aditya I was the daughter of Vallavarayan, had donated 10 **Kalanju* pon** to burn a perpetual lamp in the temple of Thirumalapadi. His other wife **Tribhuvanamādēvi Vayriyakkan** too had donated to the burning of perpetual lamps at the Siva temples of Tiruppunturuthi and Tiruchorrudurai. It is also revealed that she was a lady hailed from the Pallava lineage.[72] In the same way Kannaradēvan, another son of Aditya I involved.[73]

[69] 145 of 2005
[69] 168 of 2005
* a gold coin current in olden days; also the equivalent weight.
[70] 53 of 2005
[71] 100-108 of 193
[72] 161 of 1928
[73] S.I.I. Vol.IV.No.595.

Parantaka I's (907-955 A.D.) 15th regnal year record (922 A.D.) too suggests that his wife by making her mother Vira Narayani as witness had constituted 96 sheep for burning a perpetual lamp in the Thiruvilimilalai temple.[74]

Irrespective of the religious devisions the women were specific in maintaining the temple in light. Among the two daughters of Parantaka I, Vira Madevi, had married Govinda IV, the Rashtrakuta ruler and she was also known for her pious nature and generous activities and had donated a perpetual lamp and 60 **Kalanju pon** to the Thiruvural Peruman of Thakkolam.[75]

The queens too had their hand in the economic pursuits in some way or other. In the same way, the same queen ie.Tribhuvana Madevi, wife of Uthama Chola (973-985 A.D.) had purchased lands, which were granted as **Stridhanam** to two ladies of **Sembiyan Madevi Chatturvedimangalam** and had donated them to the Kailasanatha temple of **Śembiyan Mādēvi Chatturvedimangalam** for burning a perpetual lamp and also to offer food to 100 Brahmins on every first day of the Tamil month. Hence it is obvious that the queens assisted the existence of a cordial relationship existed between the rulers and the ruled.[76]

The inscription available at the Nageswarawamy temple at Kumbakonam indicates that Uthama Chola's wife Viranarayani had donated 96 goats to that temple with an order that one Korravan Therilam, Anji palli and Anji Palainur should burn the perpetual lamp in that temple with the income obtained from the donated goats. This inscription is carved in the 8th regnal year of Uthama Chola which is equal to 981 A.D.[77]

As it was a customary practice to donate sheep for burning the perpetual lamp the queen of Rāja Rāja, the great called Vanavan Mādēviyar too was not an exemption. She had donated 90 sheep for meeting out the expenses of the said

[74] S.I.I. Vol. XIX. No.367
[75] K.K. Pillay, **Cholar Varalaru,** Tamilnadu Text Book Society, Madras, 1977, p.148.
[76] 479 of 1925
[77] **S.I.I.** Vol. XIX No.205

propose to be executed by Narayanan, Ramanathysingadi, Muthalisingadi, Arayansingadi Ayarkolumuthri.[78] They are directed to offer specific quantum of ghee to the Vedapureeswara temple of Tirukkalithittai. This inscription which bears the date the 28th regnal year of Raja Raja i.e, 1013 A.D. exposes the involvement of queens in the art of administration in addition to philanthropic activities and charitable services.

Rājēndra I's (1012-1044 A.D.) 6th year record (1017 A.D.) indicates that his maternal aunt Kundavai Nachchiyar had granted 90 sheep for supply of a specific measure of ghee for burning a perpetual lamp at the temple at Tiruchelur.[79] Anyhow one should estimate that the Chola queens were philanthropists and were models for other women.

6.6 DONATION OF PERPETUAL LAMPS* BY WIVES OF ROYAL GROUP

In the year 877 A.D. Mutharayar's daughter and wife of Irukkuvellala, the servant of Aditya I. (871-907 A.D.) called Varabumanatty donated a sum for the burning of a perpetual lamp.[80]

During the 20th regnal year (891 A.D.) of Adhitya I (871-907 A.D.) his official Mutharayan namely Nambhi's daughter and wife of **Perumbidugu** Muttarayan called by name Vikramakesarian Achchi too donated a perpetual lamp to the Melakkoil at Kudumiyan malai.[81]

The 20th regnal year (891 A.D.) of Adhitya I (871-907 A.D.) the son of Vijayayala points out that Nangai Vikrama Kesarajan Achi, wife of Perumbidugu Mutharayan

[78] 301 of 1908
[79] 256 of 1923
[80] **Pudukkottai State Inscriptions** No.45
[81] **Ibid.,** No.31
* In ancient society worship starts with sacred fire. Later, this manifested into firing lamps in Temples. This became a sacred practice in the performance of worship. In the midieval period this custom came into vogue in Temples in Tamil country, Inscriptions reveal this fact. They are known as Santhi Vilakku, Nanda Vilakku, Kal Vilakku, Arai Vilakku. Nanda means perpetual vilakku before god. Santhi Vilakku means liting at day and night. (Ref : Villipuram Maheswaran : Cholar kalathu koyiulm samukamum, p.131.

offered two kalanju pon to burn a perpetual lamp in the Melaikkovil of Kudumiyanalai.[82] One Nakkampullyar the mother of Kannan Kadan offered 40 pon for burning a lamp in the Perumal temple of Thirumulattanam.[83]

In the same way the 24th regnal year (931 A.D.) of Parantaka I too exposes the custom of the sale of lands for burning a perpetual lamp by women with due registration.[84]

An inscription of the 11th regnal year (1157 A.D.) of Raja Raja II (1146-1163 A.D) mentions that a Vellala of Enkan called Vedavanamudayan Nagan Cheraman obtained **Kāśus** from his friend and his sister called Sorandiyan Annadhara Nangai and offered it to the Saiva Brahmin called Bharatvasi Venkadadevan for burning a perpetual lamp in the Brahmmapuriswara temple of Enkan.[85] Such facts indicate that women of all levels were involved in the different temple activities. Sirranrudaichi, a shepherdess too had installed a lamp in the Brahmapuriswara temple of Enkan.[86] Thus the 22nd regnal (1200 A.D.) of Kulottunga III (1178-1218 A.D.) too attests the fact that it was a customary practice among women to exhibit their devotion to God and temples by installing lamps in the temple and for the proper execution of the activities pertaining to the temple.

Since the women, particularly the daughters were liked by fathers a father called Varanasi Udayan of Vayalakkavur made arrangements for burning a perpetual lamp in the name of his daughter called Aludaya Nachchi. The donation was carried out with the one **Kandagopalan Pudumadai** a denomination of coin. The donation is announced on the 27th regnal year (1133 A.D.) of Raja Raja II (1146-1173 A.D.). It is worth to note that the donor was a **kalappalan**.[87]

[82] **Ibid.**, No.31
[83] **Ibid.**, 47.
[84] **Ibid.**, No.102.
[85] 113 of 1977
[86] 92 of 1911
[87] 254 of 1922

The involvements of the queens of the Chera rulers also reveal that they were having the right to issue grants of gold for burning a perpetual lamp in the Siva temple of Thirunandikkarai. Kulasekara's daughter and wife of Vijayaraghava Devan had announced this grant to the priest of the Thirunandhikkarai Siva temple.[88] But it should be remembered that it is not a unique feature because the matriarchal system (**Marumakka Tayam**) was in vogue Kerala even from a much earlier period.

6.7 PERPETUAL LAMPS DONATED BY THE SERVANTS

The women of the **Madaippalli** or kitchen of **Tirumulattanam** temple too donated seven Kalanju of Pon for burning a perpetual lamp.[89] Likewise the women who were working in the **madaippalli** of Melakkovil of Kudumiyamalai gifted 7 ½ kalanju pon for a perpetual lamp in that temple.[90]

Due to the impact and influence of the Queens, the servant maids of the Chola queens too made grants to the temple. A fourth year (960 A.D.) record of Aditya II (956-969 A.D.) refers to the gift of ninety sheep for burning a perpetual temple at Tirukkil Kottathu Parameswara temple. This was executed by Avanisigamani alias Devarayan Pullakkan, **a servant maid** of Udaiyapirattiyar Kilanedigal, the mother of Aditya Karikala (Aditya II), in the name of the queen herself.(FN.128)

An inscription available in the Vishunu temple of Tirumukkudal dated 1068 A.D. of Vira Rajendra reveals that even two lady attendants of the temple gifted two **ulakku** paddy for burning 13 night lamps in that temples.(125)

Another Kongu Chola rulers Vira Rajendra's wife Mukkokkilanadigal's servant maid called Keri too donated 1 ½ **Kalanju Pon** for burning a perpetual lamp in the Mannesar temple of Annur.[91] This inscription stands testimony to the services rendered

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[88] **Trevancore Archaeological Series,** Vol.IV.No.38
[89] **Ibid.,** No.78
[90] **Ibid.,** 78.
[91] 601 of 1922

even by the servant maids and speaks about the rights and privileges enjoyed by the women. The same is attested by the Kabalisar temple inscription which talks about the servant maid Arayankalli who donated one **Kalanju Pon** for burning a perpetual lamp (**Nandha vilakku**) in that temple. When Vanavam Madevi Sirrachcha daughter of of the Chieftain Chittarayar renovated the Virasanganatha **Perumpalli** of Alathur,[92] it is revealed that the queens were also known for their religious tolerance. Irrespective of deities they concentrated on the upkeep of the temples in all possible ways.

The **Thiruvilakkuppuram** was the grant announced by **Thiruppalli pendir** for the sake of burning a perpetual lamp in the Sarguneswarai temple at Nanniliam.[93]

Likewise Palurian Porramarai, a palace servant of Tanjore donated 96 sheep through the shephered Vennivamakkan for burning a lamp to the temple referred earlier.[94]

Mallikesiyan, another servant maid also gifted 1 ¼ **kalanju pon** for burning a perpetual lamp.[95] Another lady servant called Arajan valli too had gifted one **Kalanju pon** for the same purpose.[96] So it was a custom among women to make arrangements for the burning of lamps in the swines of the temples.

6.8 PERPETUAL LAMPS DONATED BY COMMON WOMEN

This is attested by the 12th regnal year (997 A.D.) inscription of Raja Raja, the great (985-1014 A.D.) Accordingly it reveals the fact that Singam Ponnambalam, a **Vellala lady** offered 76 sheep to the shepherds for offering ghee for burning a perpetual lamp in the Mullaivananatha temple of Thirukkarukavur.[97] Thus registration of the grants even by women was a common practice.

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[92] 594 of 1922
[93] 454 of 1978
[94] 123 of 1979
[95] 601 of 1922
[96] 875 of 2003
[97] 10 of 1995

The 10th regnal year (1081 A.D.) record of Kulottunga I (1071-1122 A.D.) available in the Manavaleswara temple at Thiruvelvikkudi informs that Vellatti Ariyal of Kandiyan had gifted a lamp to be burnt in the shrine of the goddess of that deity. The Siva Brahmanas of that temple had acknowledged the gift. So the women were having a status even in their contributions to the temples.[98] They also accepted to make arrangements for the burning of the lamps. It also suggests that the women were law abiding and prompt in adhering to the traditional approaches.

As the women were pious even private ladies such as the daughter of Devanar or Eswaraagaram had donated amount and the interest from that amount was to be utilised for burning a lamp by the Tirukkoiludayars of Vedapuriswara temple at Thiruvedikkudi.[99]

The Brahmin ladies were not an exception to such traditional practices. Even Brahmin Sandal[100] had offered money for burning perpetual lamps.

Rāja Rāja II's (1146-63 A.D.) seventh year (1153 A.D.) inscription states that the daughter of Elakkichal gifted one perpetual lamp and 32 cows to God of Edirilisola Nallur. The **sabayōr** of that place obtained those gifts and agreed to execute her orders.[101] Thus coustomary practices were executed in an unaltered specific way.

The fourth regnal year (1182 A.D.) inscription of Kulottunga III (1178-1217/18 A.D.) available at Serappananchery Vinniswara temple, informs that Kannanalvar, wife of Amanbakkilar Senthamaraikkannan, had donated four **Palankāśus** to Gangadhara Bhattan for burning a perpetual lamp.[102]

Another inscription available in the same temple but belonging to the seventh regnal year (1223 A.D.) of Raja Raja III (1216-1260 A.D.) informs that

[98] 118 of 1926
[99] S.I.I. Vol, V No.624
[100] 16 of 1977
[101] 102 of 1992
[102] 50 of 1998

Sivalogamudayal, daughter of Umayalvi, a lady hailed form the Nilankarayar Agamudayar community donated four **Palankāśu.** That amount was handed over to Udayan Pannamaheswara Bhattan, son of Bharatvasigam Bhattan for burning a perpetual lamp.[103]

One Kilanadigal, wife of Vijayaraghava Devar had donated 30 **kalanju pon** for burning a perpetual lamp in the Siva temple of Tirunandhikkara.[104]

Even among the Kongu Cholas the women had the right of announcing grants independently for burnig lamps in the temple.[105] This could be substantiated even by the fact that Gowri, the wife of a merchant called Malan donated a sum of 29 **panams** for burning a twilight in the Manneesar temple of Arunjur in the Avhinashi district.[106]

The women were possessors of wealth. When Thiruvengadu Nangai Aranudayal, wife of Vellan Kodungudayan had offered 2000 **Kāśus** to burn a lamp at the Virattaneswara temple at Korukkai it is revealed that the women had a free hand to execute philanthropic and charitable activities.[107] It was mainly due to the economic rights enjoyed by women.

Women like Choliyan Sivan Perumdevi offered a **Kāni** to burn a lamp in the Pachchottus Avudayarkoil of Madavilaham.[108] Udayapiratti, wife of Seyyon Veyyon of Kallipillas kulam of the hunters donated a lamp[109] and this suggests that women of different clans and communities were so devoted and pious and they had expressed their fascination and attachment to the temples and deities. The gift of a lamp to the Vaheeswara temple of Pattur by Pandandi, daughter of Pandivettuwar Purnatturali too stresses such things.[110] An inscription dated 1217 A.D. reveals that even

[103] 80 of 1998
[104] **Travancore State Archaeoligy Series,** Vol. IV, No.38
[105] 581 of 1922
[106] 583 of 1922
[107] 230 of 1917
[108] 229 of 1920
[109] 164 of 1910
[110] 95 of 2003

Brahmins of Naduvacheri approached Nampandimena, wife of the merehant Devanandhi for getting a donation of 1 ¼ **Kalanju pon** for burning a perpetual lamp in the Kottaipattiswaram temple of Naduvacheri.[111] This too stands to expose the economic qualities of women.

It was a common practice among ladies, due to their privilege, to donate amounts for burning perpetual lamp. In this regard it is worth to note that one Valavantha Sani, wife of Chandra Mouli Bhattan of Palanayur granted 4 ¼ **palankāśus** for burning a perpetual lamp in the temple of Malalarnudayar at Palanayur.[112] As seen earlier so many such references are available. It is worth to note here that the amounts were offered to specific individuals to execute the act of burning the lamp in the temple. Here Valavantha Sani had entrusted the worth to Akkali Bhattan, Kandy Siva Bhattan, Thiruvaharuba Bhattan and Ponnambalakkutha Bhattan with a request to execute the service without any interruption.

Porri Sami, the wife of a Brahmin called Madhava Somasi donated 12 elakasus for burning a perpetual lamp in the Machchapureeswara temple of Koildevarayan pettai.[113] In the same way, a lady from the Pāndya region too offered a half lamp for the temple of Bhumi Sundara Perumal of Rajakesari Chathurvedimangalam.[114]

The 10th regnal year (1273 A.D.) inscription of the Pandya ruler Virapandya available at the Perumanallur Uthama Lingeswara temple too attests this fact. Devi, wife of Chokkan hailed from the merchant clan of Paranjur palli had donated one **achu*** for burning a perpetual lamp.[115] Ganapattiyalvi wife of the Brabmin Vira Rajendra Brahmmaroyan of Chengarpalli had donated **palam salagai achukkāśu** for burning a lamp during the early morning in the temple of Uthama Choleeswara located at Perumanallur.[116]

[111] 890 of 2003
* a coin current in olden days
[112] 5 of 1991
[113] **South Indian Inscription,** Vol XIII, No.226
[114] **Ibid.,** No.264
[115] 963 of 2003
[116] 205 of 1965-66

One lady called Rajadichchi, wife of Ciriyavelan had donated 25 **elakkasu** for burning a perpectual lamp in the Perumal temple of Tirukkudithittai of Avani Narayana **Chathurvēdimangalam**. In the same way Ciriyavelan's daughter Kunjaramalli too offered 40 **kāśu** to burn a perpetual lamp in the same temple.[117] In the same way another lady Perumal Porri, wife of Nerkuppai Udayan had donated a land and its income for burning a perpetual lamp to the Vedapuriswara temple at Thirukkalithittai.[118]

Such philanthropic queens had their own impacts over the women of common public also. For instance, one lady called **Nedungai Desam,** wife of Datta Seelan, a merchant from Tirbhuvana Madevi Perunangai of Tanjore, had granted 30 **Kasus** for burning perpetual lamp at the Maddhapuriswara temple at Koil devarayan pettai.[119] Thus offering donations for the burning of perpetual lamps was a common feature.

6.9 LAMPS LIT FOR THE DECEASED

During the reign period of Raja Raja I (985-1014 A.D.) in his 20th regnal (1005 A.D.) for the welfare of the mother Manchavi and father Parusadevar their son Someswaradevar made arrangements for the burning of a lamp in the temple at Thirnkkoharnam.[120] Such facts indicate the son's veneration towards his parents.

Even when one of the competitors died in a dual, the wife of the deceased was used to make arrangements for the burning of a lamp in the Vashisteswara temple at Uraiyur. The 24th regnal year (1009 A.D.) inscription of Raja Raja I (985-1014 A.D.) attests this fact.[121] This is further substantiated by an inscription available in the Siva temple at Anamalai in Pollachi. Vattarnariyan Vanchi Vellala's wife had offered 10 **kalanju pon** for burning a perpetual lamp.[122]

[117] **S.I.I.** Vol.XIII No.246
[118] **Ibid.,** XIX No.5
[119] 274 of 1923
[120] **Ibid.,** 183
[121] **Ibid.,** No.1411
[122] 214 of 1927, 28

An inscription available at Kundadam states that the wife of Singam Koviyan Argaroyan appropriated a sum in the denomination of palam salagai to burn a perpetual lamp at the Vadnga Pillayar temple of that place.[123] So irrespective of their social status women of various categories were capable of announcing grants to temples without any restructions. They had religious oriented practices.

The second regnal year (1014 A.D.) eipgraphic record of Rajendra I (1012-1044 A.D.) records the 10 **kalanjus** of gold deposited with the **Urar** of Palaippandal for burning a perpetual lamp by a merchant called Angadi Porraman in memory of his Piratti Siralan. The reason for the grant was that the latter trespassed into the former's house in the night and tried to assault his mistress in his presence by which act he was engaged so much as to stab him to death.[124] This reveals the importance assigned to the morality of women.

6.10 LAMPS LIT AS TAX DUE

The third regnal year (1055 A.D.) of Rajendra II (1052-1064 A.D.) records the gift of 32 **Kāśus** in memory of a lady by same Śendan Umaiyāl for burning a perpetual lamp in the tample of Tantonri Mahadevar at Valaiyūr alias Rajendrapuram by one Malayamān kāttimelūrdaiyān Palankuran Kunran. The gift is said to be in response to a demand made by the community called **Nāngudiśai Padinenbhūmi. Nānādēśi,** who held him responsible for the suicide of the lady by poison because of some threat held out by him with regard to a tax due. Thus the inscriptions reveal that the women were feeble minded and went even to the extent of ending their lives for the strict and several administrative measures. Here the killing of her was guilt since the deceased was the mother of a security man, the chief of his group caused him to take her life. However by way of acceptance of the guilt they made arrangements to burn a lamp before God and relieved of that curse.[125] The state was executing various welfare activities.

[123] Gurusamy Siddhar, **Ibid.**, p.37.
[124] S.I.I. Vol. XXVII No.72
[125] S.I.I. Vol. XXII, No.80 and ARE 1906 No.80.

6.11 PERPETRAL LAMPS DONATED BY DEVARADIARS

The references available in the 45th regnal year (1116 A.D.) inscription of Kulottunga I (1071-1122 A.D.) available in the Melakkoil of Kudumiyamalai reveals that the groups of **Devadasis** called Kuruvaditerri, Kunradevar, Surrikunrullittal and **Koilmadu** had made arrangements for lighting lamps in that temple.[126] So it is worth to note that the women attached to the temples were to execute certain customary duties for their own personal uplift. All the activities were approved not only by the rulers and temple admininstrators but also by the common public.

This could be attested by the 15th regnal year (1161 A.D.) inscription of Raja Raja II (1146-1173 A.D.) That inscription contains the fact that **Dēvaradiyār** Dayenakkondal Sadavelinturuntalana Pathinennayira Nangai had donated 30 **Kāśus** to the Siva Brahmans of Sri Vaikavur for burning one perpetual lamp.[127]

The 16th regnal year (1162 A.D) Inscription of Raja Raja II (1146-1173 A.D.) available in the Mukyaleswarar temple at Perumukkal records the gift of 32 cows and oil for a lamp by Sivan Bhagam Kondal alias Virabhadramangai, daughter of Kulottunga Chola Manickam, who in turn was the daughter of Andangai, a **Dēvaradiyār,** a temple servant of the Mukyaleswara temple.[128]

A record of Rajadhi Raja II (1163-66-1179-82 A.D.) written in his fifth regnal year (1171 A.D)[129] refers to an agreement of a Siva Brahmin after receiving an endorsement of 32 cows and one bull for burning a perpetual lamp to Aludayar Thiruvanmisvaramudaya Mahadevar of Perumukal. This grant was made by an individual Kuttuganthal, the **dēvaradiyār** of Thiruvanmiswaram situated in **Thiruvidaikkali Nādu** of **Jayankōnda Chōla Valanādu** of **Chōlamandalam.** This too substantiates the earlier mentioned act of a servant of the government. Thus

[126] **Ibid.,** 229
[127] 50 of 1914
[128] 46 of 1905
[129] 39 of 1905

there prevailed coordination between women, officials, administrators and others in promoting religious and welfare activities.

Another inscription dated the seventh regnal year (1184 A.D.) of Kulothunga III too attests this fact because this inscription reveals that the Bhunangai a **Dēvaradiyār** of the same temple too offered 113 **Kāśus** to the Siva Brahmins of the temple.[130] So there prevailed no distinction or disparity among women in announcing grants to temples in favour of deities.

It was a customary practice of the Brahmins to register the donations offered by a lady such as Vadugi Vambu Paluttal, the **Dēvaradiyār** attached to the Vedaranyawara temple of Thiruvur.[131] The woman, a relative of Ulaganatha Devan and w/o Chakra Idam Kondan continued the tradition of offering a gift of land to the Siva Brahmins of the temple of Thiyagaraja of Thiruvayarru[132]. By donating lands she had informed that the income from that land should be utilized for burning a perpetual lamp in that temple. In the same way Udayanachchi alias Perumdevi wife of Thirunageswaramudayan, a merchant offered 600 **Kasus** to the Saiva Brahmins to burn a perpetual lamp by those people. This grant was released in the 26th regnal year (1204 A.D.) of Kulothunga III (1178 to 1204 A.D.).[133] This inscription is yet another evidence to prove that he had even gifted a copper lamp with an iron lock.

The 19th regnal year inscription (1235 A.D.) of Raja Raja III (1216-1260 A.D.) reveals that a dancing girl a resident in one of the hamlets of Virudharaya Bhayankarapuram had donated money for the burning of a perpetual lamp.[134] Another inscription available in the same temple refers to the grant of twilight by a lady called Dhukkaiyalvar.[135]

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[130] 588 of 1956-67.
[131] 300 of 1960-61.
[132] 593 of 1962-63.
[133] 597 of 1962-63
[134] 16 of 1918
[135] 20 of 1918

As such it is evident that even **Dēvaradiyārs** enjoyed a grater reputation and had a free hand in economic and charitable pursuits. When Punangai, a **Dēvaradiyāl** attached to the Thiryagaraja temple of Tiruvayyaru offered 112 **kasus** to the Siva Brahmins for burning a perpetual lamp[136] one can very well understand the position of the **Dēvaradiyārs** appointed by the rulers to the specific temple. It should also be remembered that the **Dēvaradiyārs** too had to play a multifaceted role in their lives with high reputation.

This could be attested by another record available in the same place. That record informs the endowment of 50 sheep by one **Dēvaradiyār** by name **Nakkan Ratthiyār** to the temple for burning a sacred perpetual lamp.[71] Further it should be estimated that during that period the **Dēvaradiyārs** did not occupy a despicable position in the society and were highly venerated due to their dedicated services to God. As they were the servants of God, attached to the temple, appointed to the temples or sold to the temples by rulers and private individuals, their social status was always a subordinated one. But they were not at all disrespected on any account.

These facts help to arrive some conclusion, how the women shouled their capabilities in religious related activities.

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[136] 588 of 1962-63

[137] 502 of 1962-63

CHAPTER VII

WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO SACRED PRACTICES IN TEMPLES

Chapter VII

WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO SACRED PRACTICES IN TEMPLES

Religion was only a secondary one to politics due to the calling of king as 'Iraivan' as incarnation of God. The queen and other women are considered as his subordinates. However, during the period under study. The queens, their servant maids, the universe of the official of the state were enjoying the rights and privileges in executing various philosophic activities and gained fame and name in the society.

This chapter mainly focus on the charity and sacred activities carried on by the queens, women officials, women servants of palace, other women of society and Devaradiyars. These works express the bakthi of women of those periods. This induced them to involve in the promotion of religion, particularly Saivism Religion and demonstrated their rights and mighty position in exercising their sacred and charitable activities in temples.

During the period of Nirubatunga (869-885 A.D.), the Pallava ruler of the greater Pallava lineage, his second wife Virama Mādēvi contributed lands to the temple at Tirukkodikka. By executing the **hiranyagarbha*** and **tulābāra#** sacrifices in that temple the queen endeaveoured to fulfill her needs and requirements. She had also contributed 50 **Kalanju pon** to various temples.[1] The 22nd regnal year (881 A.D.) inscription of Nirubatunga Pallava's (869 to 885 A.D.) wife Viramahadevi mentions that as a pious lady she had executed the sacrifices called **Hiranyagarbham** and **Tulabaram** and also had donated 50 **Kalanju Pon**. She had also ordered that two **nalis** of rice and one measure of ghee must be given from the interest amount of 25 **Kalanju Pon** accrued.[2] Such were the rights enjoyed by the royal queens.

* while performing yaga (sacrifice), a donor must pass through lotus like pot made of gold and does donations.
Weighing the king or other exalted person against gold and distributing the same to temples, etc.
1 S.I.I. Vol. XII, No.74.
2 **Ibid**

Uthama Chōla's wife and daughter of Ilanrukkarayār called Viranārayani contributed cash and land grants to carry out the activities of the Tiruppali of the Nageswarasamy temple. This also is exposed by the 6th regnal year (979 A.D.) record of Uthamchola.[3]

It is also worth to note that Tribhuvana Mādēviyār, the crown queen of Uthama Chola made a lot of donations to celebrate the first day of the Tamil month in the temples in a grand manner for the bathing of the deity, to provide food to the deity, and to feed 200 Brahmins on those days etc. She donated for providing paddy, sweet smelling materials, grams, gingelly, saree, **kalaśam,** rice, dhall, and ghee etc.[4] As such it is obvious that the queens were keen on observing and maintaining the religious rituals, ceremonies and activities without any interruption. All the above religious activities were arranged to be distributed by specific individual administrative official called **Pariśaragar**.

The same queen Uthama Chōla's wife Viranarayani had even assigned the grant of 20 **kāśu** to use turmeric for bathing the idol Nageswarasamy in the temple at Kumbakonam. This grant also reveals the custom that the water to bath the primary deity (**abhiśhegam**) was brought from the river Kaveri and for that purpose lands were granted by the Queens to the water carrier. The details based on almanac in fixing the period are worth to note.[5] This proves the wide wisdom and knowledge and also the customary practices adopted by the queens of the period in astronomy..

Since Śembiyan Mādēvi, the mother of Uthama Chōla had donated a pot of 190 **Kalanju** weight and 39 golden flowers weighing 190 **Kalanju** weight,[6] it was a model for her daughter in laws to adhere to such practices subsequently without any difficulty. Thus the queens served as models for other women due to their devotions and charitable qualities.

[3] **Ibid.,** Vol. III No.137 and 240 of 1911
[4] 488 of 1925
[5] SII Vol. XIX No.131 and 234 A of 1911
[6] 497 of 1925

Śembiyan Mādēvi wife of Parantaka I (907-955 A.D.) purchased a house site and donated it as **Salabhogam** to be used by the physicians for the capital city. The members of the **Mahāśabhā** of that place had granted tax remission to that after receiving a sum. This **Vaidhyabhāgam** is a grant assigned to the Savarnan Arayan Madurantakan and his family members as a regular hereditary grant. The queen had the privilege to announce grants for specific purposes such as the works of the physicians.[7] The same queen Śembiyan Mādēvi, the mother of Uthama Chōla (973-985), for the sake of her own son's welfare, had announced many grants to be carried out during every first day of every Tamil month. She had purchased a lot of lands and granted them to have the sacred bath of the idol at Tiruchelur, to offer food for **neivedyam,** to purchase new clothes for the priests and also to purchase 108 vessels etc.[8] Further the same queen for the sake of her son had donated a silver plate and a copper base to the Mandhapureewara temple at Koildevaroyan pettai.[9] She had even donated a golden **kalaśam** to the same temple.[10] These grants expose the philanthropic qualities of the queens and also the various things donated for the temple. This had influenced the future grants also Kannapperasi, wife of Uthama Chola had ordered the **Dhana Perumakkal** i-e., the devotees of the **Śembiyan Mādēvi Chathurvedi mangalam** to celebrate the birthday of Madevi. She had donated 507.5 **Kalanju Pon** to be used for providing food to different sets of people from the interest accrued from the said amount.[11] This too exposes the involvement of queens in philanthropic activities associated with economic considerations. Another queen of Uthama Chola called Dhattam Dhana Tongiyār, specifically to venerate her mother-in-law Śembiyan Mādēvi had donated to the temple, an ornament called **Bhattam**, a precious stone studded gold ornament.[12] In the same way another queen of Uthama Chola called Panchavan Mādēvi had ordered the issue of 30 **Kalanju** weighing gold

[7] 248 of 1923
[8] S.I. Inscriptions Vol. XIX No.235
[9] 262 of 1923
[10] 263 of 1923
[11] 492 of 1925
[12] 490 of 1925

ornament called golden handled **Venjamaram**[13] (a golden whisk) to the deity of the place mentioned above. As all the queens were united and co-operative with each other, the five queens of Uthama Chōla called Bhattam Dhāna tongi, Malabadi Tennavan Mādēviyār, Vānavan Mādevi the daughter of Irungolar, daughter of Paluvettarayar and daughter of Vilayparayar respectively have offered a joint donation of 905 **Kalanju Pon** to feed the Brahmins during the birthday of Śambiyan Mādēvi, their mother in law.[14] Thus the prevalence of polyagamy was not a hurdle to the successful functioning of the religious services of the family. Further as a joint venture they had the custom of offering donations jointly in veneration of the mother-in-law. This could be attested even by the donation of 108 **Kalanju Pon** for offering food during the **Kettai*** asterism of the Tamil month **Chittirai**. The amount collected as interest for the amount was to be utilized for that as a customary practice.[15] The amount of 143 and 145 **Kalanju Pons** were donated by the other queens[16] for the same propose will testify to that. Thus making donations to temples by the queens indicate their donation and dedication to deities and elders of the family. This was also a customary practice.

Bhudhi Aditha Pidari,one of the four wives of Arinjaya (956-957 A.D.), the brother of Gandarāditha,[17] donated money to Thiruchendurai Śiva temple for the regular execution of the daily rituals.[18]

Since the Tamil society was a customary society the powdering of turmeric was usually done by women as a household occupation. This is attested by the 15th regnal year (988 A.D) inscription of Uthama Chola (973 to 985 A.D). While offering grants to various sets of people, Tribhuvana Madevi, the Crowned queen Tribhuvana

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[13] 491 of 1925
[14] 494 of 1925
[15] 489 of 1925
[16] 496 of 1945
[17] **S.I.I.** Vol.VI.No.31 and 32
[18] Ibid. Vol.VIII.No.626
* one day

Chakravarthi had announced grants even to a woman who was used for powdering turmeric to be used for bathing the idol of Kailasamudayar at the Śembiyan Mādēvi Chathurvedi Mangalam.[19] The amount needed for such other expenditures are also donated.

Tribhuvana Madevi, wife of Uthama Chōla (973-985 A.D.) donated 100 **Kāśus** and arranged for the conduct of special rituals from the interest amount accrued.[20]

It is obvious that the women of the royal blood were placed in a higher position. This could be attested by the third regnal year (988 A.D.) inscription of Rāja Rāja. Kilanadigal, wife of Uthama Chōla and daughter of Malavarāyan had donated lands yield for the purpose of bathing the deity of Vedapureeswarar of Tirukkalithittai with the use of water by 108 pots and also to feed the deity.[21] So the queens had the privilege of involving themselves in noble charitable deeds and philanthropic activities. Here it is worth to note the purpose for which different varieties of grants are announced or donations are offered. They offered donations with specifications.

An equal status along with the ruler assigned to the queens is highlighted by the 4th regnal year inscription of Rāja Rāja II (1150 A.D.)[22] Further it is evident that the Queens were able to learn the administration of philanthropic activities from their husbands.

Ulagamādēvi alias that Thathi Sakthi Vidāngi ,the crowned queen of Raja Raja, the great (985-1014 A.D.). She too was a pious lady and conducted the **hiranyagarbha** sacrifice. She had donated a lot to that temple for the successful conduct of rituals without any interruption.[23]

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[19] **South Indian Inscriptions**, Vol. XIX No.380.
[20] 480 of 1925
[21] 298 of 1908
[22] 103 of 1931-32
[23] K.K.Pillay, **Op.cit.**, p.204.

The Tirukkayilayamudayar temple inscription available as Chōlamādēvi dated 993 A.D. the chieftain Vira Chōla Elangovarāyar of Tenkarai Chōlamādēvi Chatthurvedi Mangalam. It is also pointed out that interest accrued should be used for executing the rituals during the **Avittam** festival day. It is also mentioned that the balance should be granted to the **Bhattars** (priests) of the temple.[24] Such facts indicate that the women of that age were capable of extracting financial transactions with the support of the administrators of the state including the temple.

Rāja Rāja's queen Mukkokilanadigal is hailed for her noble qualities and personal traits which were comparable to the renowned nature of her husband, the Chōla monarch. The queen was by the side of the ruler, who was engaged in a specific administrative act of taxing the excess lands which are donated as **Brahmmadēyam**[*], **Devadānam**[#], **Pallichandam**[&], **Salabogam**[$] and **Rājakulam Kānipparru**[0].

Though there are no other facts about there, he had too daughters called Arulmoli Nangai and Ammangadēvi. Arulmoli Nangai was a staunch devotee of Śiva and she made land grants to the deity of Tirumalabadi.[25]

Pallavan Pattalinangai, wife of Rājadhi Rāja (1018-1054), who was also called Vijaya Rājēndra Dēvā, along with many of her associates had donated huge amount of gold and gold ornaments to the Tiruevilinatha temple at Tiruvilimalai.[26] The same queen had constructed a separate shrine called Pattali Eswaran and donated 128 **Kalanju** and four **manjādi kunri pon** to that shrine. She had even issued directives

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[24] T.S.Sridhar, **Tamilnadu Inscriptions**, Tamilnadu Government Department of Archacology, Chennai, 2004, pp.14-15

[25] 71 of 1920

[*] Village given as gift, mostly Tax-free, to brahmanas.

[#] Village or land gifted to temple.

[&] Tax free village or land endcwed to Jaina temple.

[$] It is also mentioned as ara-ch-chalabhogam. : Tax-free land given to and set apart for the maintenance of feeding houses.

[0] land or village in the enjoyment of the members of the royal family (the term occurs along with devadana, bramadiya, pallichandam etc.,)

[26] 384 of 1908

to the ways by which the interest amount should be utilized. The following were the expenditure met out from that amount.

Purchase of 1+5 = six sarees

,, of oil for the lamp

,, of hand pounded rice, ghee, oil, turmeric, mustard grams, curd, betel, arecanut etc., for offering to the deity.

The same queen had obtained 32 **Kāśus** from a private lady and handed them over to the 12 Siva Brahmins to be used for providing curd rice to the God Thiruvilinathar on the newmoon day.[27] Such facts stand to prove the rights and privileges enjoyed by the queens to celebrate specific ceremony uninterruptedly without any deviation.

Trilokya Mādēvi, donated costly jewels studded with many precious stones.[28] The Venkatesa Perumāl temple inscription of the fifth regnal year of Vira Rājēndra (1062-1070 A.D.) i.e., 1068 A.D. mentions that the following were the donations arranged by different female attendants of the Chola Royal family.[29] **Staff Daily Allowance,** Two female attendants, Two **Ulakku** ghee for burning 13 perpetual lamps, two female nursing assistants, Four **Nāli** ghee and ½ **Kāśu** each.

The Royal women enjoyed many privileges. The queens of Kulottunga I (1071-1122 A.D.) called Ādittan Kambamadeviyar alias Tirubhuvanamuludayār and Ādittan Anda Kuttiyar alias Arukkan Cholakulavalliyār donated the lands purchased from the **Nagarathars** of Tundumukkacheri on 1084 A.D.[30] The same inscription announced by Kulottungā I during his 14th regnal year i.e., on 1084 A.D. contains another unique fact. The king during his visit to the Ulagalantha Perumal temple of Kanchipuram

[27] 235 of 1938
[28] **S.I.I.** Vol, V. No.512
[29] 119 of 1916; E.I. Vol.XXI. No.38
[30] 39 of 1921

announced the above said grant at the request of his wife. Thus the queens were having influence over the rulers and administration and were also in the high esteem of the rulers who executed the requests of the rulers without any opposition. The royal orders had to be obeyed by **Chetties, Malayālar** and women of **Ahamudayar** community and they were compelled to execute the rituals in the **Śenai Mudaliyar Śhrine** of Srirangam.[31]

Kulothunga I's (1071-1122 A.D.) 40th regnal year inscription mentions that Kambadevi, a queen of him was also a devotee of Ulaga Perumal of Kanchipuram. She had even donated the wealth for the conduct of rituals on the day of the asterism **Puśam** and the **Duvādaśi** during the waxing moon. It is obvious that the queens of the Chola rulers were known for their charity and devotion. In that respect they were not only pioneers for the successors of the royal family and but also for the other common women folk to be pious and dedicated at all times.[32] It is also worth to note that the transactions were all executed with the approval of the monarch. So there prevailed cordial relationship between the charitable activiteis of women and the administration.

The above facts indicate that the royal women who had economic independence were regarded and respected for their religious pursuits and philanthropic activities. Śembiyan Mādēvi, the wife of Gandaraditta and the mother of Uthama Chōla was respected. Kundavai, the wife of Vallavarāyan Vanthiyādevan and elder sister of Rāja Rāja I along with the former were few queens who carried out pious deeds.

7.1 INSTALLATION OF GOD'S IMAGES BY WOMEN OF ROYAL GROUPS

Rajendra I's General Rajendra Chola Anukka Pallavarayan's mother Sreedevi was responsible for the installation of the copper idol of Alagiya Manavalar.[33]

[31] **S.I.I.** Vol. XXIV, Nos.203 and 257; 51 and 89 of 1938-39
[32] 45 of 1921
[33] 444/1908

The women, due to their pious nature took part in making grants to temples to execute the rituals conduct of regular ceremonies and festivals. The third regnal year (1054 A.D.) of Rājēndra II's (1052-1064) available at the Thiruvilinalinathar temple of Thiruvilimiilai[34] informs that one Sridevi, mother of Rajendra Chōla Anukka Pallavarayan, during the 10th regnal year (1022 A.D.) of Rajendra I (1012-1044 A.D.) due to her devotion had donated a copper image of Alagiyamanavalar and announced other donations for the execution of rituals to that deity.[35]

Due to the economic prosperity and also because of the privilege to announce grants, even Paluran Porrāmarai had donated 90 sheep to the Tirumuthirukkoil Perumāl of Tirucherai.[36] The donor, a servant maid of the palace too was known for her economic prosperity. The women at different levels were allowed to grant donations exclusively for temple activities.

Like the rulers of major dynasties, those who hailed from minor dynasties along with their wives granted paddy to three temple guards for this services. An inscription available in the Kabaleeswarai temple of Thiruvalanjuli refers to the donation offered by Śembiyan Mādēvi, daughter of Ilamukkarāyar.[37]

The **pattamulathars*** of a temple were receiving the grants offered by women to the temples. In some temples that work was carried out by temple officials called **pattudai panchacharoyar, devakanmigal@**.[38] **Pattudayan asariyan** had recived 30 **kalanju pon** from **Ali Arasiyar,** wife of Purathuvelalar.[39] The women were able to issue their grants along with other donors in a joint way. The inscription available at the place called Valikondapuram, belonging to the 31st regnal year of (938 A.D.) Parantaka I (907-955 A.D.) attests the above fact.[40]

[34] 235 of 1938-39
[35] 444 of 1908
[36] 123 of 1979
[37] 19 of 1931
[38] **S.I.I.** Vol. V, No.48
[39] **Ibid.,** VIII, No.563
[40] **Ibid.,** XIII, No.195
* denote a group which accepted donations and government orders.
@ a servant of God and Temple official

Arujanral and her brother Soran Thanthi had gifted 32 **kalanju pon** for purchasing ormaments and lamps to the Thirumalai **Kadambar** temple of Narthamalai.[41] This reveals the nature of the women and their families. Due to their attachment to deities they had announced above such donations and maintained their social prestige and status.

The 12th regnal year (1228 A.D.) inscription of Rāja Rāja III (1216-1260 A.D.) states that a donation of land and house site for the offerings to the God Vellai Pillayar by a lady called Kuraval Parrudaiyār, wife of Vallankilayar of Rayunur.[42] This gift was made by the lady for her own personal welfare. So she had gifted land and houses to feed the deity of that place. So it is evident that the women in general were known for their philanthropic activities.

Another inscription of the wife of the chieftain called Araisurudayan Arayan Gunadayan of **Arcotta Kurram** of Pandya Kulasini Valanadu dated 1230 A.D. i-e the 14th regnal year of Rāja Rāja III (1216-1230 A.D.) is a quite unique one. The lady had donated an **iraiyili** land to commemorate his father-in-law. This grant is made to the execution of the regular rituals on every new moon day at the Brahmaveswara temple at Tiruppandurai.[43] The attachment towards the elders of the families and the traditional practice of offering grants in the name of the dead and gone elders are revealed. It is also worth to note that the women of all stages were specific in maintaining the customary practices.

7.2 GRANTS MADE BY COMMON WOMEN

The 5th regnal year (961 A.D.) inscription of Adhitya II (956-969 A.D.) available in the Nageswarasamy temple of Kumbakonam records the sale of land by Periyan Tribhuvanasundari for 85 **kalanju** pon and the amount covered was to be spent for

[41] **Pudukottai State Inscriptions.**, 503

[42] **Ibid.**, 1978.

[43] 137 of 1932

offering food to one Brahmin of the Paramaswamy temple. The donee was a servant of the palace.[44] This too attests the varied activities associated with women.

Neelam Dhyagi, the wife of a merchant of the Madevi Perangadi called Nakkan too donated 20 kasu which was equal to those of the 10 pons. This donation was arranged to the Perumal temple of Tiruchelur. This inscription dated 964 A.D. too points out the donation was arranged even by the wife of a merchant and that in turn speaks of the rights enjoyed by women in the society.[45] As an identical measure Raman Nangai Venni, wife of Arayan Tali, a merchant of the already referred Madevi Perangadi too had announced a similar grant.[46] While the earlier inscription has the date 964 A.D. the later one is dated 969 A.D. It is obvious that the womenfolk of merchants due to their philanthropic nature were particular in announcing similar grants due to their contacts with each other. It also reveals that the women were able to announce land grants due to their privileges and prosperous and wealth nature. In general the women were generous and philanthropic and indulged in charitable activities regularly. Another inscription available in the Airavadeswara temple at Thirukkottaram too attests this fact that is enabling women to possess lands and to sell it and it states that the lady who had sold that land mainly for the sake of donating it to the Vellanai Vidangar temple of Thirukkottaram.[47] Another inscription available in the same temple mentions that a lady called Kalyana Madeviyar had paid 108 **Kāśus** as for donation releasing a land as a tax free one.[48] So the women were particular in the economic transactions pertaining to the temples.

Two women called Thiruvidai Nachchi and Ellakku Nachchi of Avarani village of Nagapattinam had gifted one veli land as tax free gift to Ponnalaikkuru Siva temple. Such facts too reveal the accessibility of women in announcing grants independently.[49]

[44] 224 of 1911
[45] 241 of 1923
[46] 246 of 1923
[47] 387 of 1978
[48] 389 of 1978
[49] 484 of 1922

Vasudevan Māhadēvi, wife of Kamudavan Korran Dhamodharan had gifted land, paddy, Kāśus, house site to the Nageśwarasami temple of Kumbakonam. The amount was to be used for making ornaments such as Sengalunirmalai to the deity and to provide noon meals to the deity.[50] Thus the women were enjoying the right and privilege to dispose of their properties in any way they liked.

The ninth regnal year (1021 A.D.) inscription of Rajendra I (1012-1044 A.D.) records a gift of 28 **Kalams*** of paddy by a lady for feeding the dancing girls of the temple at Thiruvidaivasal during the Chittirai festival. The interest had to be met from the annual interest of seven Kalam, the rate of interest being three Kuruni* per kalam.[51]

The 18th regnal year inscription (1164 A.D.) of Rāja Rāja II (1146-1173 A.D.) available in the place called Thirukkalar informs that even women had property rights like men. The women had that right as a spontaneous one. When one of the Śivanadiyar had no male issue, it was decided that the female issues also can offer food to the temple deity. Even when the women had no male issues their other successors were given that right. In the same way when Purva Sivanana Pathaka Nayagan, a Brahmin, died without any male issue the right of offering food to the deity was granted to his son-in-law called Manru Miranthan Anbarkadiyan. When his sister-in-law too was a widow, her son Divakaran got the right of offering food. Such facts stand to prove the status and the position of women existed then. As the women had no right to execute the temple rituals such as offering food to the deities were granted to the male members of the family.[52]

To the Saranatha temple at Tirucherai Appayayi Ammai and her husband Vallal Iyengar had donated things for the regular conduct of the rituals of the temple.[53]

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[50] 256 of 1911
* According to measure of quality of Chola period 12 marakal is equal to 1 Kalam. one marakal equal to present 8 padi.
I marakal (present - 8 padi)
[51] 29 of 1918
[52] **S.I.I.** Vol.III, No.210
[53] 120 of 1979

Arulmoli Arinjigaippriatti had donated 220 pon to carry out the rituals during the time of **Kettai**[&] asterism in the Tamil month Chithirai.[54]

An inscription dated 14, January 1914 available in a stone near Ulagalantha Perumal temple of Kanchipuram informs that Narasimha Ammal, wife of Munusamy Naidu, a timber merchant from Chennai had constructed six houses and the income from those houses by way of rent was to be used to conduct a mandagappadi and also to provide curd rice everyday as soon as the temple ritual is over.[55]

An inscription dated 14, January 1914 available in a stone near Ulagalantha Perumal temple of Kanchipuram informs that Narasimha Ammal, wife of Munusamy Naidu, a timber merchant from Chennai had constructed six houses and the income from those houses by way of rent was to be used to conduct a mandagappadi and also to provide curd rice everyday as soon as the temple ritual is over.[58]

Manedanangandi, the Thanjavur **Karralipirattiyar** and **Velattu pendatti*** had offered 20 **kāśus** to the **Perumakkal** of the Nageśwarasamy temple. The amount was to be used to purchase land for the watter carrier who brought water from kaveri for bathing the primary deity of the temple.[59] Thus the women were also known for their generous activities.

The inscription of the ninth regnal year (1060 A.D.) of Rajendra II (1052-1064 A.D.) mentions that Korrigammai, a lady had issued grants to the temple at Thiruvidaivasal. The said amount of grant offered was received by Nambiśadayan, who had distributed the interest for that amount to that temple.[60]

[54] 482 of 1925
[&] one day
[55] 58 of 2005
[56] 58 of 2005
[57] **S.I.I.** Vol, XIX, No.131.
[58] 28 of 1918
[59] 68/1918
[60] **Pudukottai State Inscriptions.,** 219
* Women servant, worked in palace - bathroom, madaipalli and bedroom of queen and also served in temples because of their relation with palace.

The 9th regnal year (1061 A.D) inscription of Rājendra II (1052-1064 A.D.) available in the Mahamandapa of the Thiruvidaivasal temple reveals that one lady called Korriyammai donated a sum to that temple. The amount was collected and the interest (Palisai) was granted by Nambi Sadayan to the above temple for executing the temple activities. Thus women even possessed wealth and were given the right to engage in economic transactions associated with public institutions especially such as temple.[61]

Nachimalaiyalviyen Udayal, daughter of Periya Nattasiriyan during the 15th regnal year of (1085 A.D.), Kulothungā I (1071-1122 A.D.) had assigned a land as kudininga devadanam to the Signatha Swamy temple of Kudumiyanmalai. The land donated was purchased by the donor before assigning it to the donee.[62] This too will attest the economic rights and social privileges enjoyed by women during the chola period. This seems that there are the customary practices entrusted to women.

Parakesari Vikrama Chola's (1118-1135 A.D.) seventh regnal year's (1125 A.D.) inscription refers to the community of **Utkrishta Ayogavas**, the esteemed weavers of the three **mandalams** called Dharmaparipalapuram, Velakani alias Rajendra Chōlapuram and Nilapadi Virantakapuram. It also attests that they obtained 12 house sites and agreed to supply clothes for flag and to God during festival days. The record states that the **Ayogava** community was one of mixed caste sprung from royal family women, (**Rajasthri**) and Vaisya men (merchant community). The bride is from Kshatriya community. The **Utkrishta Ayogava**, off spring from a Brahmana with a Vaisya women is already referred by two inscriptions of Vikrama Chola (208 of 1919 and 508 1922). The former one is located at Tirubluvanai and the other one is at Triukkannapuram. The mixed caste called **pratilomas,** as per **Smiriti,** was assigned honourable services and were associated with the adjective **utkrishta**

[61] 110 of 1992
[62] 25 of 1918

meaning esteemed.[63] It should be noted that the status of women was given recognition.

A lady of Komapuram had donated 40 **Kāśus** to the temple of Thiruirdaiyavalli Udayar during the 19th regnal year (1197 A.D.) of Kulottunga III (1178 A.D-2004 A.D.).[64] Two other inscriptions available in that temple also attest this fact.[65]

Another financial transaction could be attested even by another inscription available at Swarnapuriswara temple at Attur dated 1210 A.D. of Kutottunga III (1178-1218 A.D.). The mother of one **Rajakesri Adhrayan Aravamudu Kutha Piran Bhattan** executed a sale transaction of a land through the **Devakanmigal*** and **Srikaryam Ceyvor** of the temple.[66]

An inscription, available at Koyambedu, datable to the 34th regnal year (1212 A.D.) of Kulothunga III (1178-1217/18 A.D.) refers to the digging of a well for fetching water for cooking at the temple by Devandayal, wife of Karuppulan Vaduganathan. So the ladies who were aware of the various welfare activities enjoyed the privilege of announcing grants independently and had executed such activities with deep devotion towards the temples.

A lady called Andavan Perumal, wife of Sirutiruvenkadamudayan too had sold a land for 15,000 **Kāśus** and had donated it to the temple during the second regnal year (1218 A.D.) of Raja Raja III (1216 to 1260 A.D.).

7.3 DONATIONS MADE BY SERVANT MAIDS

The women served as servant maids. A servant maid called Vikramamani of the Chola queen, as directed by the latter queen purchased land and granted that to the temple. This inscription of the 33 regnal year (940 A.D) of Parantaka I (905-955

[63] 30 of 1918 and 32 of 1918
[64] 121 of 1927
[65] **S.I. Inscription,** Vol, III, No.10.
[66] Pudukkottai State Inscription No.367 and 368
* temple servant, executive in charge of the temples affairs.

A.D)[67] stands as authentic testimony to estimate the role of the women's involvement in various economic deeds. It also reveals the customary practices associated with men.

In the same way, the servant maid of the queen of Raja Raja I called Umabhattara too contributed to the temple at Tenkarai.

During the 13th regnal year (959 A.D.) of Vira Pāndya (946-966 A.D.) inscription available in the Malayamangai temple of Kudumiyamalai, reveals that the **Nāttar** of the place and the temple accountant (**Koil Kanakkar**) had sold lands to Nachchiyar, the daughter of Durgai Aandar, the **Dēvaradiyār** associated with that temple.[68] Only due to economic prosperity the devaradiyars dedicated to the temples were also in economic trasactions and that in turn assisted them to maintain their social status. The women thus enjoyed the privilege of involving in social welfare and religious oriented activities.

A record of Rājadhi Rāja II (1163-1172 A.D.) in his fifth regnal year (1171 A.D.) speaks about the offering of 36 cows by Kuthuganthal, a daughter of Nachi of Kurrur, who was a servant maid in the temple of Thiruwammiswara mudayar of Perumukkai.[69] Such facts indicate that it was a recongnised custom even the servant maids who were attached to the temples and they too were pious and orthodox in executing charitable deeds to the temples for the regular conduct of rituals and festivals as per the asterisms and auspicious days and such specifications stand to prove the qualities of women.

7.4 DONATIONS MADE BY DEVARADIYARS

An inscription dated the third regnal year (1015 A.D.) of Rajendra I (1021-1044 A.D.) engraved on a pillar in the **Muhamandapa** of the Airavadheswara temple

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[67] 39 of 1905
[68] 29/1918, 30/1918 and 32/1918
[69] 114 of 1992

too records that one **Dēvaradiyār** called **Pundal Solai** had endowed a **thiruvidainilai** made of bronze to the God of Thirukurumullur.

A 9th regnal year (1021 A.D.) inscription of Rājēndra I available in the Punniyanatheswara temple at Thiruvidaivayil informs that 28 **Kalams** of paddy was donated by a lady to the above referred temple. The amount recovered as interest for the entire amount was used for feeding the **Dēvaradiyārs** appointed in that temple by the ruler. This act was carried out during the **Chitrai** festival. Thus the rulers were cautious in honoring the dancing girls at times of festivals and this will also expose the venerable nature of women professionals.[70]

Kulottunga II's (1133-1150 A.D.) eighth regnal year record (1141 A.D.) reveals the fact that Kodaialvi alias Puravari Nangai, daughter of the **Dēvaradiyār** of the temple of the God of the sacred hill in Perumukkil alias Edirilisolanallur consecrated the image of Vinayaka in the goddess' shrine. The **Sabariyar of thiru unaligai** (priests) received six **Kāśus** from her and agreed to offer two nali of rice to God Vinayaka daily so long as the sun and moon endure.[71]

This could further be substantiated by another inscription of the 15th regnal year (1161 A.D.) of Raja Raja II. But this donation is associated with the dancing girl (**Dēvaradiyār**) Thanyenakkondal Sadaimelirundal alias Padinennayira Nangai and these existes no disparity in the execution of charitable activities.[72]

The temple worship was carried out by the donations of the **Dēvaradiyārs** and it is worth to note that they had continued that tradition uninterruptedly and continuously for three generation. This is attested by the 16th regnal year inscription (1162 A.D.) of Rāja Rāja II (1146-1163 A.D.)[73] Audanangai, her daughter Kulothunga Chola Manickam and her daughter Sivanpagamkondal were the three women referred

[70] 50 of 1914
[71] 46 of 1905
[72] 53 of 1914
[73] 107 of 1977

to in this inscription. Such continuous traditional activities of women too reveal their social status.

Rāja Rāja II's (1146-1173 A.D.) 17th regnal year inscription, (1163 A.D.),[74] available at one **Mahamandapa** of the Vilvanathaswamy temple of Thiruvaihavur informs that one **Udayanachi,** daughter of Anukkiyar Anangapatakaiyar installed the deity Nittavinodha Kalyana Sundara Devar and his consort in the temple and deposited 200 **Kāśus** with the officials called **tānattār*** of the temple. The **tānattār** agreed to supply rice, dish inclusive of pepper, betel leaves, arecanut daily with the money deposited at the temple treasury to the deities regularly. This too will attest the regard and reputation maintained by women in the religious, economic and administrative affairs of the society.

Rājadhi Rāja II's (1163-1182 A.D.) 12th regnal year inscription (1175 A.D.), Perumbarrapuliyurar, the daughter of Tiruttondayār had gifted eight **Kāśus** to the Priest of Bhirammapuriswara temple for burning a perpetual lamp.[75] Even during the 22nd regnal year (1200 A.D.) of Kulottunga, III (1178 to 1218 A.D.) one Karayil Nangai had gifted **Kāśus** for burning a perpetual lamp in the Bhirammapuriswara temple of Enkan.[76]

The same ruler's (Rāja Rāja III (1216 to 1260 A.D.). 11th regnal year (1226 A.D.) inscription available at Thiruvilimililai temple informs that the Siva Brahmanas collected two measures of rice from the offerings granted to the **Dēvaradiyārs** of the temple. The same inscription reveals that they had even made arrangements for the regular payment of 7500 **Kāśus** for executing a ritual in that temple.[77]

The 11th year (1226 A.D.) of Raja Raja III (1216-1260 A.D.) points out that the Siva Brahmanas after deducting two measures of rice from the one provided to the

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[74] 108 of 1977
[75] 409 of 1908
[76] 409 of 1908
* Temple priest

Dēvaradiyārs appointed by the state to the Thiruvilinathar temple.[78] It suggests that the position of the **Dēvaradiyārs** were subordinated ones to the temple priests. Even the queens of the Kongu Chola rulers did not lag behind in maintaining their position by being pious and philanthropic. For instance, an inscription of Vira Rajendra and (1207-1256 A.D.) 4th regnal year i-e., 1211 A.D. refers to the grants made by his queen Madevi Cilambalvi to the shrine of the goddess Thirukkamakkotta Nachchiyar of Avinashilingeswara temple at Avinashi.[79]

The 11th regnal year inscription of (1227 A.D) Sundara Pandya (1216-1238 A.D.), available at the Eswaran temple of Perumanadu informs about the grant of land as **kudinīnga dēvadānam*** to Alagiya Varadar, the daughter of Kariyar, the **Dēvaradiyār** of Vadakonattu Thirupperumadak Koil.[80] This grant was executed by the **Dēva Kanmis** and the administrators of the temple.

The women who possessed properties were always law abiding. So that Maravarman Sundara Pāndya I (1216-1238 A.D.) during his 31st regnal year (1237 A.D.) had granted **Irayili** lands to Alala Sundaranangai, the **Dēvaradiyār** of the Thirumarainatha temple at Thiruvathavur. Such privileges were granted to her and her family members in lieu of the services rendered by them to the temple as ordered by him.[81] This too will attest the subordinated position of the **Dēvaradiyārs** even during the Pāndya rulers. Though they were generous, philanthropic and pious they had to act according to the commands of the administrators.

Maravarman Sundara Pandya I's (1216-1238 A.D.) 21st regnal year inscription (1237 A.D) records the grant of **Iraiyili** or tax free lands for food offerings, burning lamps and other expenses of the temple. The donated lands were irrigated by

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[78] T.S. Sridhar, (Ed), **Inscriptions of Coimbatore Dist. Vol**, I, Dept. No.730 of 2003 of Archaeology, Government of Tamilnadu, Chennai, 200, p.8

[79] **Pudukottai State Inscriptions.** 442.

* Endowment to a temple, of lands already in the occupation of cultivating tenants.

[80] 471 of 1962-63

[81] 471 of 1962-63

Thiruvathavur tank. This record also mentions about the instalation of bronze images of Chandrarekara and Gouri in the temple by the **Dēvaradiyār** called Kulanjal Arasan alias Alala Śundara Nangai. It also reiterates that she made arrangements for procession of the deities.[82] In the same way another inscription available at the Tirumarainatha temple at Thiruvathavur too informs about the grant issued by the **Dēvaradiyār** of that temple.[83] So it is obvious that the **Dēvaradiyārs** were occupying a responsible place in the society due to their endowed position to the deity of specific temples.

Another inscription of Maravaman Sundara Pandya I (1216-1238 A.D.) points out that the **Dēvaradiyāl** Ammayalvi of the Kulathur temple agreed to pay paddy, gingili etc., for enjoying the **kudininga dēvadānam** of the land sold to the Villinallan and Villivisan of Kulatthur.[84] An inscription available at the Thirukkadambar temple at Narthamalai belonging to Parakrama Pandiya's period refers to the sale of land by removing the taxes to the following women by the temple accountant.[85] The following are the donors who provided it after making it as 10 shares.

1. Periya Nachchiyār
2. Pillandal, (D/o Sellandal)
3. Perranachiyar (D/o Nallathai)
4. Nallathai (D/o Pērrandal)
5. Nambi Nachchiyar (D/o Mallaya)
6. Karanthu Nachchiyar (D/o Mallaya)
7. Privavikkunalar (D/o Periya Nachchiyar)

[82] 29 of 2003
[83] **Pudukottai State Inscriptions.** 515.
[84] **Ibid.,** 620.
[85] **Ibid.,** 624

8. Unnamulayar (D/o Periya Nachchiyar)

9. Vedavanapperumāl (D/o Narchchiyandar)

10. Nalla Thāyar (Vedavanappamal)

The above facts reveal that the state even assigned landed properties to women. Further it is evident that the position of women was in an appreciable state. Another inscription of the same ruler too attests that Nallapillaiperral, daughter of Pāndya Thēvar obtained a particular land as **kudininga dēvadānam**. It was mainly due to her dedicated services to the temple and society which had offered a specific laudable position.

This also testifies to the privileges enjoyed by the **Dēvaradiyārs** in politics as well as religious pursuits during the Chōla period. The same trend continued even during the thirteenth century during the rule of Rājēndra III (1246-1279 A.D.). A dancing girl of Karavandeeswara temple called Bhumi Thiruvudayāl alias Thiruvagambadi Virachōla Pallavarayan gifted a specific land as tax free land to the above temple. The conversion of the land as tax free was through the **Perumkuri mahaśabai***. For executing that activity she remitted 250 **Kaśu** in advance to the **Tānattār**. The gift was intended for the deity **Aludaya Pilliyār** etc.[86] Thus the **Dēvaradiyārs** attached to the temples were pious and had the privilege of executing philanthropic and economic activities. Their requests and statements also were accepted without any objection.

During the second regnal year of (1249 A.D.) of Rājēndra III (1246-1279 A.D.) a lady called Karusuday Nachchiyar had purchased lands and had donated those lands to the sages of the Thirunavukkarasar Mutt of Thiruvilimililai as **madappuram**.[87] Thus the women were pious and chairtable in arranging grants in an appropriate

[86] 20 of 1986

[87] 402 of 1008

* Administrative Body of Temples, looking after the works related to Temples like receiving donations, allowing Tax exemptions for lands and protecting the Donated materials etc.

form. These grants and donations were of different kinds. For instance one Sivappinacheliyar, daughter of Paliyanchiya Nallur Ramalinga Nayinar, wife of Vilinatha Narayan and mother of Ramasamy Nayinar had donated a **mandapa** for the preservation of the temple car of that place.[88] So due to keen observaton the women announced grants in an apt manner.

As ordered by Maravarman Kulasekara (1268-1308 A.D.) during his 29th regnal year (1297 A.D.) Kuttandal's daughter Alageyam Nachchi, Thayardal and Seminal donated lands to Thirumarainatha Swamy temple at Thiruvathavur and that was covered as tax free or **Irayili** lands.[89]

During the 29th regnal year (1297 A.D.) of Maravarman Kulasekara (1268-1308 A.D.), Kakuthandal's daughter Alagiyal, Nachchiyandal and Bhayandal Selamandal had gifted free lands to the Thirumarainatha temple of Thiruvathavur as **panangadipparru iraiyili**. Thus it is obvious that the women had the right to announce land grants by making them as **iraiyili** or tax free lands.[90]

The women executed their transactions only through the **Tānattār** or the local village officials. Udayamachi, daughter of Arukkiyar Anangapatagaiyar installed the deity Nidhya Vinotha Kalyana Sundaradevar and his consort in the temple and deposited 200 **Kāśus** with the officials of the temple.[91] The interest for the capital of 200 **Kāśus** is worked out as six and quarter **Kāśus** per month. The **Tānattār** had agreed to supply rice, dish, inclusive of pepper, betel leaves and arecanut daily at the temple treasury to be offered to the deities. Thus the women had their own contacts and related activities legally.

Kuthan Adaikkalan Kathal, wife of Diwarakara Bhattan, the Priest of the Mullaivananatha temple by purchased land by keeping Bharadhayan Bhattan

[88] 609 of 1977
[89] 9 of 2003
[90] 7 of 2003
[91] 53 of 1914

Janardharan paid a fine of five **Kāśus** and also submitted the land which was granted to her for the celebration of the daily rituals.[92]

A Canarese inscription available in the **Pida** of an idol of Manickavasagar reveals that when Godhavari Devi's daughter cash grants made for providing **Amudhupādi** to the deity.[93] This testifies to the fact that the pious queens of the royal families were having regular contacts with temples and were maintaining their reputation by their dedicated services of charity to the temples.

Adhanamalagiyar, the daughter of the **Dēvaradiyār** Nalla Pillai Perral donated money to renovate udayar[94] and this attests the role of the **Dēvaradiyārs** attached to the temples. They maintained their position really by dedicating themselves to the cause of religion. They completely dedicated themselves for the maintenance of the temple due to their fascinated devotion to the specific deities.

The inscription available in the Nageswarasamy temple of Kumbakonam dated **Śaka** 1412 (1490 A.D.) belonging to the period of Konerideva Maharaya, successor of Saluva Dhimmana, the Vijayanagar Ruler reveals that even the son of **Dēvaradiyār**, possessor of the title Roya Manickam the property of the temple too granted donations.[95] This too stands testimony to the enhanced status of **Dēvaradiyārs.** It is rather unique to note that even the family of **Dēvaradiyār** too were interested in executing grants for the deities due to their position due to God. The names such as Rajavichadivi, Nallappilai of the same family had donated land and cash grants to the Ananda Narayana Perumal temple of Avarani in the Nagapattinam district[96] and these things expose the economic prosperity, piety and social recognition of the **Dēvaradiyārs** attached to the temple.

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[92] 7 of 1995
[93] 791 of 2003
[94] **Pudukkottai State inscription** No.686
[95] 259 of 1211
[96] 214 of 1978

It is also mentioned that the **Kuthi** called Kunurudaya Perumal had donated lands for exacting the rituals of the Melakkoil of Kudumiyamalai. (FN.194) Since the **Dēvaradiyārs** associated with the temples were greatly recognized they themselves had contributed a lot to the development of the religious activities and welfare of the temples. The 30 names of the **Dēvaradiyārs** are given in succession it stresses the political status of those people attached to the temples.

From another inscription available in the flag mast of the Vittaleswara temple of Vittalapuram Muddhi, the daughter of Sevvan was in charge of the maintenance of the flag mast,[97] it is evident that women served in the temple services also due to their devotion or **Bhakti**.

An undated inscription available in the Thiruvidai Eswaramudayar temple at Thiruvadisulam mentions that Namselvi Thirugnanasambanda Manickam, a **Dēvaradiyār,** who was the daughter of Selvappillai made arrangements by offering a platform for the dance of Siva and his Consort.[98]

The **Dēvaradiyārs** were particular in maintaining their status by looking after the welfare of the temples to which they were attached. An inscription engraved on the inner side of the southern wall of the **ardha mandapa** of Airavatheswara Temple at Anaiyur records that a **Dēvaradiyār** called Uyya vandhal had donated eight **ma*** of land to the Thiruvangeeswaramudaiyar temple at Thirukkurumullur. This land was a **dēvadhāna**[&] land and was irrigated by the southern sluice of Varandur.[99] Thus the women were capable of estimating the condition of agriculture and they had turned out their best to promote it.

Another inscription of the same ruler bearing the same date reveals that Perumal and his daughter, who was the wife of Vijayagangan had transacted a land

[97] 5 of 2002
[98] 16 of 1932-33
[99] 340 of 1960-61
* 4 Kaani is one ma
[&] Village or land gifted to Temple.

sale to be donated to a temple.[100] As such it is obvious the women were involved in the adoption of traditions and customary practices.

Thus it is evident that the Queens of the different dynasties of the Tamil country were occupying a privileged position in the society. They were devoted to their husbands and family and also were known for their charitable philanthropic and welfare activities. Due to their pious and devoted nature to God they were allowed to announce grants independently and they were all acknowledged by the state. They were responsible for maintaining diplomatic and cordial relations between that states due to matrimonial alliances. Some queens even constructed new temples, while some of them converted, the brick temples into stone structures. They were keen on the uninterrupted conduct rituals and ceremonies. The queens earned their own titles and had equal status with the rulers in attending the court proceedings and they shared the throne along with the ruler. The queen's servant maids and subordinates were also enjoying the rights to issue grants to temples. To that extent they were wealthy and privileged. They had even donated various things by their own personal accord.

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[100] 58 of 1914

CHAPTER VIII

DEVARADIYARS AND TEMPLE ADMINISTRATION

Chapter VIII

DEVARADIARS AND TEMPLE ADMINISTRATION

The kings appointed **Dēvaraḍiyārs** to the temples. In the same way even people of wealthy nature too granted women as Dēvaradiyārs or servant maids or slaves to the temples. They were also venerated because of their own personal traits and the higher status offered to them in the temple. As they were attacted to the temple as devotees of God they were given a respectable place in the society known for its devotion. They were wealthy and possessed lands and housesites granted by the rulers. With regard to temple rituals and festivals they took up the lead. They were even appointed to dance and sing in the temples. In addition to that they had to execute their regular and day to day services in the temple. They maintained high status due to their chastity, morality and dedicated services to temple and society. The kings, village authorities and temple administrators looked after their needs and requirements and streamlined their regular activities. Though they were associated with politics the position of the devaradiyars was a subordinated one. They too were philanthropic in character. They were even allowed to lead a married life. The references about the various grants made by their daughters and sons will suggest their nature. The kings and wealthy people donated dancing girls to the temples and they were known as devaradiyar. So it is evident that the women attached to the temples were maintaining their cultural traits and contributed to fine arts and devotional activities.

This chapter deals with one class of women of Tamil Society, known as **Dēvaradiyārs**, and presents the role and functions of them in the temples as maid servants and dancers. Further, it is also dealt about their rise and the significance importance they acquired during the Chola period and their fall in the subsequent periods under other rulers.

The rulers had assigned lands mainly for executing specific duties in the temples at times of the ceremonies, rituals and festivals. The Dēvaradiyārs were also given the titles such as Manikkam due to their services to the temples. So the women occupied a recognized status in the Tamil polity. As they played their role in restricted areas they were uncorrupted and were prompt and earnest in executing their duties without any stress. From the inscriptions no mentions are made available about their intellectual calibre. But that does not mean that they were ignorant and illiterate. In the field of politics only the queens and their associates such as servent maids were given a venerable status. Further religion was only a secondary one to politics due to the calling of king as iraivan or incarnation of God. Such activities stressed even the queens and other women as his subordinates. But the queens, their servant maids, the wives of the officials of the state were enjoying the rights and privileges in executing various philanthropic activities and to gain fame and name in the society. Under such circumstances it becomes a must to know about their status and position in the society as depicted in the inscriptions. This could be anaylsed in this chapter.

8.1 APPOINTMENTS OF DEVARADIYARS TO THE TEMPLES

K.A. Nilakanta Sastri as mentioned by Marco polo had mentioned that there was a tradition called **pottukkattal***. It was a custom among the Tamils of the medieval period to handover their girls to the deities of the temple of their like. Those girls were used to celebrate a festival with joy. Different varieties of food stuffs were also cooked with their assistance. After offering them to the deities the food materials were distributed to the guests and others who were present in that temple. Such practices were continued till the dedicated girl got married.[1] The **dēvadāśis** and **dēvaradiyār** were experts in fine arts such as dance and music. The Chittannavassal

[1] K.A. Nilakanta sartri, **Foreign Notices of South India,** New Delhi, 1939, p.281.

* A ritual performed to initiate a lady to become Devadasi - dedicated to the service of the Temple. This ritual could be performed in a temple where she has to do service.

paintings reveal the execution of the dances with the **Gajahastta** and **Latha Vrichchuham** poses by their left and right hands respectively.[2] The **devaradiyar** of Tiruchendur Subrabmanya temple were receiving grants to dance in that temple during the rituals, called **Mahābooja** and **Andhikkappu***.[3] The women dancers were enjoying high respect in the Tamil society and the experts among them were issued land grants and they were also venerated even by the title called **Talaikkoli◆**.The **Dēvaradiyār** were also granted lands.[4]

The **Dēvaradiyārs,** who were well versed in dance and music and engaged themselves in temple activities and rituals, had a respectable place in the society. It was also a customary practice among the **Dēvaradiyārs** to maintain their status in a hereditary manner. The Ananda Narayana Perumal temple inscription available at Avarani attests this fact.[5] An incomplete inscription of the 9th regnal year (955 A.D) of Vira Pandya (946-966 A.D) suggests that **Dēvaradiyārs** were hereditarily appointed to the temple called **Pallippaḍai** available as Sundara Pandyiswaram at Pallimadam. The Chola monarch Raja Raja I. appointed more than 400 **Dēvaradiyārs** to the temples.[6] As they were also associated with the Siva temple it is evident that women of that group too continued to have hereditary possessions.[7] They were even hailed with the titles. The women dedicated to the temples as dancers were entitled as **Talaikkoli,**[8] **Śribalikottuvar#,**[9] **Kaverippinakkal.**[10]

[2] C. Minakshi, **Administration and Social life under the Pallavas, University of Madras,** Madras,1976,p.293.
[3] 365 of 1949-50.
[4] S.I.I. Vol.XIV No.182.
[5] 11 of 1999
[6] T.S.Sudhan (Ed) **Select Inscriptions of Tamilnadu,** State Department of Archaeology, Chennai, 2006,p.157
[7] S.I.I. Vol. XIV of 83
[8] **Ibid.,** Vol. Vol. XIX No.460.
[9] Nannilam Inscriptions Vol.II, No.259 of 1978.
[10] **S.I.S.** Vol.V. No.520.
* Evening Service performed in temples.
◆ dancing women adept in her profession.
Musical troupe of temple playing on the instruments at the time of sri-bali which means image of the deity taken round the temple when offering the bali service (bali-offering to God of flower, flower, fruits, rice etc., uncooked, generally referred to also as Sribali)

Likewise during the reign period of Cholan Talaikonda Vira Pandiya's (946-966 A.D.) ninth regnal year i.e., in 955 A.D. the Kailasanatha Swamy temple inscription of Pallimadam too pinpoints that Karauthachilai, her daughter Kavathi Kanayam perral, her daughter Mandhi Sadayam Pidari and another lady called Tiuchuliyal Nidhiperral's daughter Kavidhi Thangi were all absorbed as **Dēvaradiyārs** in the temple already referred. The ladies of the families in hereditary succession dedicated themselves by the efforts of the rulers to the temples and they received their life needs from the state.[11] Such facts reveal their services in religious activities.

The nineth regnal year inscription (955 A.D.) of Pandya Talaikonda Vira Pāndya (946-966 A.D) available at Pallimadam[12] indicates the employment of **Dēvaradiyārs** to the Siva temple the **Pallippadai** of Sundara Pandyapuram. The availability of the successive names of the **Dēvaradiyārs** such as **Karuthachilai Imagal Kavathi**, her daughter **Sadayam Padara** and **Nidhiperral** and her daughters **Kavitti* Thangi, Nakkan Sadayam Kulamgaivilai, Acham Kulugavilai and Wakkam Kulungavilai** will suggest their status and standard of pious living. It is obvious they were dedicated to temples whole heartedly and maintained the reputation of the common public.

The **dēvaradiyārs,** who are mentioned in many inscriptions were associated with the temple and had social recognition. The Tanjore Pragadeeswara temple had 400 **Pathiyilar.** These **Talichchery Pendir** were experts in dance and music. They were called by different names due to their varied services. They rendered their services all throughout the day in a temple by living in the temple. So they were known as **Talichery Pendir.** Their dedicated services fetched them the name **dēvaradiyār.** Their deep involvement and engagement in the fine arts such as dance, they were called **Nātaga Kanigayar.** Above all as they were unmarried they had the

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[11] 279/2005

[12] 429 of 1914

* Kavitti A Pandya record from pallimadam (SII, Vol, XIV, No.83) refer this nord as title, prefixed to the name of Devadasi.

name **Pattiyilar.**[13] But Marcopolo, the Venetian traveller had offered a different version. According to him they were pious and dedicated themselves in the execution of dance and music in front of God. They even offered food and other auspicious things to the deities of the temples to which they were attached. They ate the food, which were offered to the deities as **neivedyam**.The inscription of Rajadhi Raja I (1018-1054 A.D.) states that a **dēvaradiyār** called **Saduran Seduri** was the wife of Nagan Perumkadan.[14] So it could be inferred that amount the women who were dedicated to the temples should have married and they should have made their daughters as their successors as **dēvaradiyārs. Royar** was also a title offered during the vijayanagara regime, to the **dēvaradiyārs** one of the inscription was found in the Sucindram temple. Further there was no bar or restriction for becoming a **dēvaradiyār.** People belonging to various clans and communities became **dēvaradiyārs**. They even offered donations on behalf of their brothers and family members.

The **Dēvaradiyārs** appointed in the temples were called as **Maheswaras** and the food provided to them by the temple was known as Thiruvamudu. They were to be fed by the amount of interest accrued out of the deposit of 60 **Kalams**[0] of paddy deposited by Govinda Grama Vriddhan of Guntur in the temple of Manavaleeswara of Thiruvelvikkudi. As this inscription is dated 1079 A.D. i.e., the 27th regnal year of Rajendra II (1052-1064 A.D)[15] it is evident that the **Dēvaradiyārs** dedicated by the parents and appointed to the temples by the rulers were venerated by the people and were protected by the temple itself.

During the period of Rājadhi Rāja II (1163-1182 A.D.) four women sold themselves as Dēvaradiyārs to the temple.[16] All these facts stand to prove that women, who had

[13] Sadasiva Pandarathar, T.V. **Pirkala Cholar Varalaru,** Annamalai University, 1957, pp.567-568
[14] 147 of 1912
[15] 108 of 1906
[0] 12 marakal is equal to I kalam
[16] 96/1925

the privilege of being members of the administration, due to proverty sold themselves as slaves and devardiyars to the temples. Further it is evident that there were no restrictions for the women to select their avocations and prospects. Though such aspects were applicable only to a limited number of women it is worth to note that such things would have been approved and acknowledged by the society. This could be attested by the rights and privileges enjoyed by women and they adhered to various traditions and customary practices.

The 35th regnal year (1213 A.D.) of Kulottunga III's inscription refers to the fact that Narpathennayira Manickam, a Dēvaradiyār of Thivurppam puramudayar temple was attached with temple rituals and festivals and given certain rights to be carried out during the days of Thiruvadhirai and during the month of Margali.[17] The government officials such as Koil Kanakku, Srikaryamceyvan and Maheswarakkankani have attested the transaction of the issue of specific rights religious oriented to the Devaradiyars attached to a temple. The Mahasabayor, Urkanakku and other village staff had attested the donations offered by the same lady.[18]

The same trend continued to exist even during the reign of Śambuvarayas in the 14th and 15th century. The fifth regnal year of Rajanarayana Śambuvarayar's (i-e, on 1342 A.D.) record of Adhipuriswara temple of Tiruvorriyur calls those temple servants as **Patiyilar, Taliyilar*, Isaibataliyilar, Dēvaradiyār**. They were entrusted with different services in the temples.[19]

The same **Mahamandaleswara's** another inscription available at the Musukundeswara temple of Kodumbalur states that Valittunai Peurmal, Pillai lillal, Moyyar were granted the duty to be carried out in the temple as **Dēvaradiyārs**.[20]

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[17] 94 of 1911
[18] 92 of 1911
[19] 212 of 1912
* Persons attached to temples, Temples servants, mostly women.
[20] **Ibid.,** 718.

The inscription available at the Bhairava temple at Rangiyam too points out that the mentioned temple had no **Dēvaradiyār**. So Udaiyammai was made as a **Dēvaradiyār** and was given little **Pallavaraya Manikkam**. She was entrusted with the rights in the temple and was given a house site hands were also granted. This was made as a written agreement between the temple authorities such as **Koil Kanakku** and **Koil Pandāram** and the individual **Dēvaradiyār.** Even her successors too had their rights. The **urar** too had lent their consent to this act.[21] Likewise the Bhairavasamy temple at Sevalur too reveals that **Dasi** Aviyay was made as **Dēvaradiyār** in the temple of Thiru Bhumisura Nayanar at Sevalur.[22] So it is evident that **Dēvaradiyārs** played a significant role in the temple and the administration also devoted to the appointment of **Dēvaradiyārs** in the temple.

Even during the reign period of the Vijayanagar rulers the **Dēvaradiyārs** were attached to the temples as **Kani**. The inscription of Nageswaraswamy temple of Kumbakonam dated **Saka** 1412 (1490 A.D.) belonging to the period of Konerideva Maharaja, offers a fact that Sethiraya Manickam was a **Dēvaradiyāl** attached to the temple. Her son Thirumanam also had donated to the temple.[23] Such facts reveal that the **Dēvaradiyārs** were appointed and attached to the temple and they led a married life and had issues beyond their services to the temples.[24] It is also evident that they along with their families devoted to temples.

The **Dēvaradiyārs** were given landed properties in lieu of their services to the temple. They were even gifted lands for their meritorious welfare services. Same of the **Dēvaradiyārs** were donated to the temples as slaves due to economic considerations. The position of the **Dēvaradiyārs** was not at all a contemptuous or despicable one as per the inscriptions. They maintained their high social status in a

[21] **Pudukkottai state Inscription** No.814 and 840
[22] **Ibid.,** 826.
[23] 259/1911
[24] 279/2005, 588 of 1962 etc.,

hereditary way. They offered wealth to the Brahmins of the temples to carryout the rituals uninterruptedly. Thus they were real slaves and devotees of Gods.

There were different set of women who were engaged in **Kuthu** and they had the right to enjoy the grant called **Kuthukani**. Most of the donative inscriptions prove that women were keen on announcing gifts of land and money to the temples for burning perpetual lamps. They were given the opportunity to enjoy the grants such as **Udirappatty, Erkadamai, Pokkadamai, Tarikkadamai** along with houses and cultivable lands. Further for maintaining their personal welfare and also for the wellbeing of others the **dēvaradiyārs** and common women announced grants. When the **dēvaradiyārs** were honoured by titles such as **Nalu thikkum venra manickam** and when they had the **devaradimai kani** one can adjudge the social status of women as depicted by various inscriptions.

8.2 DĒVARADIYARS' PERFORMANCE/SERVICES

The **Dēvaradiyārs** associated with the temple were carrying out the duties such as cleaning the temple, offering the rice to be used for **neyvedyam** and singing of **Tiruppadigam** in front of the deity etc.. They had the right to carry the flower vessel and the plate containing holy ash during processions. They were not belonging to a single group or caste.[25]

However singing songs and executing dance were their duty. As decided by the Sthanathar, Thiruvambalabrithi Sanduru Kalamanickam, Arputhakkutha Manickam, Villavadhai Manickam, her daughter Ganavathi Kulothunga Chola Manickam, Pollapillayal Thiruguanarombanda Manickam, Sirukoil Manickam Rajagambira Manickam, Cholakula Manickam Cirrambala Manickam, Tiruvennaval Manickam, Tirukkallirrupadi Manickam, Kuthadunachi Thirunadampurintha Manickam were arranged to carry out dances at times of different festivals.[26] Thus there were specific

[25] Rajamanickanar, M. **Kalvettukkalil Arasiyal, Samayam, Samudhayam,** Sekar Publications, Chennai, 1977, p.95

[26] **Pudukottai State Inscriptions** 162

set of women to carryout particular services as decided by authorities on specific occasions. They were even to dance as per the schedule as decided by the temple authorities.

The **patiyilar** and **dēvaradiyār** carried out the main dancing in the temple. The Istabalalayar provided the music **akamarkam**. The **dēvaradiyār** carried the flower plate (**pushpatolagai**) and the holy ash (**tirunir kappu**). The **ishtabatalayar** decorated the floor with **varikkolam** by using rice flour. In addition to the above the women were employed to hold the mirror before the deity, fanning the deity with the fly whisk[27], carrying the **Sripadam** etc[28].

As seen earlier the women were employed in different activities in different names. The dancing girls were called **adu pattiram** and those who sang **Devara Padigams** were called **padu pattiram**. They were granted a specified amount of cooked rice by the temple.[29] This detail is available in the Marudeesar temple of Kadathur. So for the sake of their daily bread the women dedicated themselves to various kinds of activities.

Elunattu Nangai executed the **Santhikkuttu** during the **Chitirai** festival. She had to execute nine kinds of dances. The dance was conducted in front of the Vangai Vayilander temple. For that she was granted **dēvadāna irayili land**. The **Mahasabayār** of the temple ordered to give paddy to her even where there was no yield from those lands.[30]

As seen earlier the women were employed in different activities in different names. The dancing girls were called **adu pattiram** and those who sang **Devara Padigams** were called **padu pattiram**. They were granted a specified amount of cooked rice by the temple.[31] This detail is available in the Marudeesar temple of

[27] **SII, Vol.IX.No.1035.**
[28] A.R.E 380 of 1919
[29] 1 of 2004
[30] **Pudukkottai State Inscriptions**, No.128
[31] 1 of 2004

Kadathur. So for the sake of their daily bread the women dedicated themselves to various kinds of activities.

The Kanchipuram inscription of Nandhivarman Pallavamalla (731-796 A.D.) exposes that there were dancing girls such as Perumangai Ponmadi, Adimani Madevi, Kumaradi Manickadevi, Sigaimani Kunantangi, Digaimani Suddhi, Sindhadi Kumaradi, Nangadai Auja Ditti Mutti, Avvadi Vriyedi Padadi, Sulakkodi Avvodinangan, Mudhiyakkan Seedevi.[32]

The 14th regnal year (1132 A.D.) inscription of Uthamachola (1118-1135 A.D.), informs that there were women dancers who were engaged to execute **Santhikkuthu** during **Chitrai** festival. She was directed to carry out the nine types of **Kuthus** and for that she was granted lands.[33] Another inscription dated 1168 A.D. too informs the same fact one Umalyalvar Sadhira Vidanga Nangai, for the dance to be arranged at the time of **Chitirai** festival was given a specified quantum of paddy.[34]

During the 14th regnal year (1132) of Vikrama Chola (1118-1135 A.D.) the ruler engaged a lady to dance before the deity during the **Chitra** festival by donating land for that. The ruler ordered her to execute the nine types of **Kuthus.**[35] In the same way the fifth regnal year (1168 A.D.) inscription of Rajadhi Raja (1163-1182 A.D.) available in the Viyakrapuriswara temple of Tiruvengai Vassal indicates the donation of paddy to the women called Umaiyalviyar who was appointed to dance before the deity during the **Chitra** festival.[36] The kings even appointed ladies to clean and to keep the temples neat and tidy and they were regularly paid by the temples, a sum of five **Kāśus**.[37]

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[32] **S.I.I.** Vol. VI, No.827.
[33] **Ibid.,** 128
[34] **Ibid.,** 139
[35] **Ibid.,** No.128
[36] **Ibid.,** No.139
[37] **Ibid.,** No.241

Another inscription dated 1175 informs that four women sold themselves as **dēvaradiyār** to the temple of Thiruvalangadu[38]. During the Chola period five women were gifted to the temples of Thiruvorriyur for dehusking paddy[39]. The women dedicated to the temples in the above ways they were engaged in the temple indifferent activities such as singing (**Geetham**), dancing (**Santikunippam**), cleaning the temple with cowdung (**tiruvaluko, tirumelukku**), cleaning the rice (**talikai vilakku**) etc. Among those women attached to the temples they were placed in a hierarchical order as **patiyilar** (those who were beloved and dear to God)(150). Thus the women included as **Dēvaradiyār** in the services of the temple carried out different kinds of services.

The 12th regnal year (1175 A.D.) inscription of Rajadhi Raja II (1163-1172 A.D.) suggests that the women should execute their duties at all uninterruptedly. If at all there arose a break it should be compensated by a substitute. For instance when Nerrikkan Nangai, a dancer could not exearte a dance performance during a festival it is mentioned that she herself made an alternate arrangement for the continuation of the dance at the time of her inability by arranging a substitute.[40] This was also a customany practice among the women, who were the beneficiaries of **Kuthukkani,** a grant offered by the state to the performers of different kinds of dance accompanied by music, to be specific in execution their routine duties.

At the time of the 12th regnal year 1182 A.D) of Rajadhi Raja II (1163-1166, 1179-1182) the Dēvaradiyārs were experts in enacting dramas called Kuthus. So one Nerrikkan Nangai, who used to enact Kovana Natagam (Drama) associated with Amarneedhi Nayanar, one of the 63 Nayanmars, was a recipient of a land grant called Kuthukkani. When she was unable to carry out the regular rituals, the Perungkkuri Mahabha arranged for a substitute. This was a registered Irayili land.[41]

[38] **Ibid**, 80 of 1913
[39] **Ibid**, 122 of 1912
[40] 34 of 1995
[41] 34 of 1995

Thus the different inscriptions available in different parts of Tamilnadu belonging to different periods generally reveal that the women were known for their sanctity and devotion. They had the right to be philanthropic and generous in gifting lands and other things to the temples. They showed no disparity to any religious order. The samething was applicable even to the **dēvaradiyārs**. There are references to pinpoint that there were women who devoted to Jainism. But, it should be remembered that the inscriptions reveal their association with temples and few other customary practices associated with women. Anyhow one should note that the women were not generally surperior than men. The women also maintained their own individualistic calibre. But they were generally venerated and they were not mostly exposed to the public. The **Dēvaradiyārs,** who are now called prostitutes, were not given such a despicable position. They were venerated becaues they were dedigated to deities and temples. They were not only associated with the activities pertaining to the temple but also were given permission to involve in land transactins. As they were known for their artistic temperament they assisted in promoting the temple architecture. They never bothered about their normal place in the society but their position in the society was a renowned one. As they were economically well of they never worried about the announcemnent of grants and donations to temples. In the temples there were many women servants who occupaied only a secondary position next to **Dēvaradiyār**. Public women to enjoyed economic rights eventhoughtheywere generally subordinated to men and society. The impact and influence of society over the women was heavy and the latter could not deviate from traditions and customary practices.

8.3 VENERATION TO DĒVARADIYARS

During the reign period of the Pandya ruler Varaguna II (862 to 885 A.D.) in his second regnal year (824 A.D.) in memory of Sattan Deyam, a **Devaradiyar** of the Brahmapuriswara temple at Tinnevelly a perpetual lamp was allowed to burn.[42]

[42] **South Indian Inscriptions,** Vol. XIV No.18

A 13th regnal year (961 A.D.) inscription of Vira Pandya (946-966 A.D.) available at the Melakkoil of Kudumuyanmalai reveals that the **Nattar**, the **Parameswara Kankanis**, the **Devakanmis**, the **Kanakkars** of the temple and the **kaikkolar** of the temple had gifted a land to the **Dēvaradiyār** called Nachiyar, daughter of Dukkaiyandār.[43] The sāme information is also available from another inscription.[44] Such facts authenticate that the **dēvaradiyārs** were enjoying a venerable position in the society.

The 400 **dēvaradiyārs** attached to the Prihadeeswara temple were housed on the four sides of the temple and the places of occupation of those houses were also specified by the ruler. To assist them many assistants were also appointed as the permanent servants of the temple. From the temple **Pandaram*** paddy was distributed to them. The paddy granted to the **dēvaradiyār** was measured by **adavallan,** a measure and that will exhibit the importance assigned to **dēvaradiyārs** by Raja Raja. The following were the **dēvaradiyārs** who were granted houses.[45] Nakkan Pattali, Nakkan Padam, Chola Kula Sundari, Adhimani, Abayathal, Aumani, Aruyir, Aviperral Arayiram, Elanga, Imilavanyi, Uthamadani, Karpaga Manickam, Karpaga Bhani Kamakkodi, Kami, Kamuthri, Karayil, Kunjara Malli, Kudittangi, Kuthedi Saduri, Chittiravalli, Sirudayal, Seelamlamani, Bharani, Varahi, Diaga Sudar, Tullai Alagi, Jullaikkutti, Thillai Nirainttal, Tiruppurvani, Thiruvalagi, Thithaichery, Tuduri, Thanguri, Nayanavalli, Nichal Kuppai, Param Oaramai, Pitchi, Puhali, Pungali, Porkesi, Porkavi, Madhanavalli, Malalai Cilambu, Manabarani, Minavan Madevi, Naluvemilai, Veedhi Vidangi, Virani, Virasoli, Vembi are the few names of **Talichchery pendirs#** mentioned in the inscription. Such facts stand to prove the veneration given to the **dēvaradiyārs**.

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[43] **Ibid.,** 367
[44] **Ibid.,** 368
* Treasury
[45] **Ibid.,** II, No.66
\# women of Talichchery (living quarters attached to temple), dancing girls attached to temples.

Further it is also revealed that they were allowed to enjoy a social status, position and property. Such facts are revealsed by the inscription of Rāja Rāja I during 1011 A.D available in the Tanjore Brihadeeswara temple[46]. It was a customary practice among the Chola rulers to marry **Dēvaradiyār** and to enhance their social status. For instance Panchavan Madevi, one of the queens of Raja Raja, the great was the daughter of Thirllaiyalagi, a prostitute.[47] In the same way Anukkiyar Paravai wife of Rajendra, the great was a prostitute.

Another inscription available in the same temple informs that Pothayi Adaikkalankatha Manikkathal, a **Dēvaradiyār** of that place was attached to that temple and she was given the first house in the **madai valaham** street and 20 **kuli** of land. The grants were executed by the **urar** and **koil kanakku** as directed by Mallikarjina Deva the **Mahamandaleswara.**[48] Thus the position of the **Dēvaradiyārs** was a respectable one because they were attached to the temple as acknowledged by the administrators of that period.

The Melur Lakshmana Perumal temple inscription also reveals the fact that the **Dēvaradiyārs** were granted lands as **śarvamānya** for their services to the temple.[49] The Agasteeswara Swamy temple at Melathanayam refers to the offering of the little **Mañikkam** to the **Dēvaradiyārs** by the administrators.[50] The bearing of the title **Manikkam** by **Dēvaradiyārs** is attested by the Kailasanatha temple inscription of Velavarmanikkam also. The term **Mānickam** which refers to a costlier stone suggests that the **Dēvaradiyārs** enjoyed a respectable position in the society through their role in the temple.

Because of the reputation maintained by them they were entrusted with the right to enjoy **Śarvamanyam, Madapparru, Erkkadamai, Thaikkadamai,**

[46] **South Indian Inscriptions**, Vol. II, No. 60
[47] S.I.I. Vol.V. No.644, Vol.VI, No.33.
[48] **Ibid.**, 710.
[49] **Ibid.**, 870.
[50] **Ibid.**, 918.

Pokkadamai etc. The Eswaran temple inscription at Keelaikkurichchi attests this fact.[51] As seen earlier, as the **Dēvaradiyārs** were all attached to the temple, they were directed by the state to execute the various duties in the temple.[52]

The Narthamalai Thirumalaikkunramudayar inscription reveals that the sons of **Dēvaradiyārs** who led a family life were venerated by the temple authorities as directed by the ruler. For instance Cheyyan, Udappan and Mallappan the sons of the **Dēvaradiyār** of that place were given house sites and paddy fields. In addition to the above one son called Udappan was rewarded by a title called **Śandēśvaramarayan.** They were also given the right in the temple and also in the temple activities. The above referred house sites were available at Thiruvanaikkovil.[53] So it is evident that the **Dēvaradiyārs** were not.

An inscription dated 1342 A.D. of Rajanarayana Sambhuvaraya reveals that the **Dēvaradiyārs** who served in the temple were designated by different names such as **patiyilar, taliyilar, ishabataliyilar** etc.[54]

Ragunatha Nayaka, the Tanjore Nayak's representative called Madhaya Nayakka Mallappa Nayakkar of Thiruvarijiyam had granted certain income from few taxes as Sarvamanya to the Devaradiyar of that place. This is a continuation of a tradition of venerating a Devaradiyar, and it suggests the position enjoyed by the group of people. Who were dedicated to temples and venerated by all.

During the **Nāyak** period, Madhayya Nayakka alias Mallappa Nayaka had made arrangements even to make over the amount of the taxes to the dancing girl or the **Dēvaradiyār.**[55] Another inscription available in the Thiruvanjinatha temple too attests this fact.[56] Thus it was a customary practice to include women in land transactions.

[51] **Ibid.,** 953.
[52] **Ibid.,** 1110.
[53] **Ibid.,** 702.
[54] 77 of 1911
[55] 77 of 1911
[56] 78 of 1911

As the kings had faith over the **Dēvaradiyārs** attached to the temple, the Siva Brahmins too venerated the **Dēvaradiyār** of Thiyagaraja temple of Thiruvayyaru called Vadugi Vambu Paluthal by getting amount for the lighting of a perpetual lamp in that temple.[57]

8.4 OFFERINGS/DONATIONS OF DĒVERADIYARS

During the reign period of Kulottunga I (1071-1122 A.D) Achapidaran Ganapathy Nambi alias Alagiya Pandiya Pallavarayan, a Chola general submitted his family women to the temple at Tiruvallan to execute the services in the temple. Some of the **Dēvaradiyārs** were experts in dance.[58] Such facts stand to expose the superior contribution of the **Dēvaradiyārs** to art, temple, society and politics during the medieval period.

It is also unique to note from the 13th regnal year inscription (1191 A.D) of Kulottunga III (1178-1218 A.D.) available in the Sedapuriswara temple of Thirupamburam, one Alavandal a Devaradiyal, had donated two ladies called Thiruvadayal Nachchi and Koil Kandal to the temple.[59] Thus the kings, who donated and appointed Dēvaradiyārs to the temples encouraged and influenced the public also to follow suit in donating girls to Siva temple. This also testifies to the fact that the tradition of Pottukkattal (i.e) leaving a girl to be the servant to God to a temple officially should have continued during that period. Thus there prevailed a social tradition exclusively pertaining to women.

The 13th regnal year (1191 A.D.) inscription of Kulottunga III (1178-1218 A.D.) offers a unique detail that Alavandal, a lady was in possession of dancing girls. She had even offered some of them to the temples. As they all were related to one another it is evident that the women of single family had their own tradition of dedicating

[57] 300 of 1960-61
[58] 126 and 212 of 1908, **Archeological Report on Epigraphy,** 1922, p.102
[59] 145 of 1977

themselves to the temples to execute dedicated services to God.[60] Though their inscription had not talked anything about the sale or gifting of the dancing girls it is clear that they were pious and devoted and were interested in involving women in devotional activities. It is also worth to note that even a lady called Thiruppani Ammai too involved in settling an issue reganding the Siva temple of Puttur.[61]

Even Thiruvagatheeswaramudaya Nagar temple of Madathukkovil too had a **Dēvaradiyār** called Alagiyanachi Pillandal alias Tiruvenmaligai Manikkattal too adhere to the customary practices and donated to this temple. The donation was to execute the bathing of the deity regularly and to cover the deity with **Thirukkappu.**[62] The **Dēvaradiyār** Umagavi Periya Nachchi was given land by the **Urar** and **Koil Thānathār*** as per the directives issued by the ruler Sundara Pandya (1216-1238 A.D)[63] due to her dedicated services to the temple to which she belonged too.

The **Dēvaradiyār** of the Vedapureewara temple of Kunnandarkoil called Adhanamalagiyar, daughter of Nallapillaiperral too had granted donations to the temple.[64] The **Dēvaradiyārs** were greatly venerated for this donative measures also. As an impact and influence, the three sons of a **Dēvaradiyār** of the temple above mentioned called Ceyyon, Udappan and Mallappan were given the title **Sandesura Marayan.**[65] Another inscription available in the Eswaran temple of Kila Kurichi mentions that one Talayari Vanichi Nayakkar had donated a **Dēvaradiyār** called Pothayiyana Adaikkalam Katha Manikkathal. It is worth to note that the inscriptions mostly refer to **Dēvaradiyārs** and their role in the services of the temple. Very rarely common women's services are narrated.(217)

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[60] 145 of 1977
[61] 192 of 1977
[62] **Ibid.,** 286
[63] **Ibid.,** 319
[64] **Ibid.,** 686.
[65] **Ibid.,** 702.

8.5 PURCHASE OF DĒVARADIYĀRS

It was also a customary practice to sell women as the **Dēvaradiyār** to the temple.[66] They were purchased many times by women and offered to temple services. Another inscription of Rajadhi Raja II's (1161-1182 A.D.) 13th year (1174 A.D.) reveals that the kings made arrangements to purchase women as **Dēvaradiyār** to the temple of Thiruvalangadudaya Nayanar at Tiruchengattangudi for 700 **Kāśus.**[67] They were attached to the temples to redress their economic grievances and to execute their religious activities without any difficulty. This too attests the status assigned to women by the rulers.

8.6 DĒVARADIYĀRS' KINSHIP

From the above facts it is revealed that all the daughters of the Dēvaradiyārs were associated only with their mothers. No names of the fathers are given. Further no names of male members are also given. Such facts stand to prove the status and position of the Dēvaradiyārs. At the same time the Chola ruler Kulottunga I is hailed as Irumarabum Tuyya Perman.[68] Any how the Devaradiyars were all athached to the temples and were carrying out the act of dancing and singing along with the issue of grants to the temple. They carried out these activities hereditarily. The sisters and daughters also had served. They were all having their link with the administrators of the temple. They even engaged themrelves in the economic transactions of purchase and sale as well as transfer of lands. They were known for their generous and philanthropic activities. They executed their duties as per the directives issued by the kings and the temple authorities of a specific temple.

[66] 80 of 1913
[67] 80 of 1913
[68] **S.I.I.** Vol, XII, No.243

8.7 COOLI/ DONATIONS TO DĒVARADIYĀRS'AND THEIR RIGHTS

As noticed earlier, due to the recognition offered to them by the administrators the **Dēvaradiyārs** were granted lands as well as houses. Along with the above mentioned references the Mannargudi Madanagopala Samy temple inscription clearly reveals that the **Dēvaradiyār Peṅdugal** were given the lands.[69] Such facts also reveal that the services of the **Dēvaradiyār** were an unavoidable one in the temple.The terms **Udayar Kottandaramar thani sevagam**[70] and Panchavan Mādēvi's **Satru bhayangara terinda velam** will attest the above.[71]

The Kabardeeswaras temple inscription of Thiruvalanjuli dated the 15th regnal year (1231 A.D.) of Rāja Rāja III (1216-1260 A.D) records the sale of a house site measuring 36 **Kol** to the temple of the Tiruvalanjuliudaya nayanar. The transaction was made by the sons of **Kaduvettigal** and their mothers for 40,000 **Kāśus.** The inscription further states that the sons were the guardians of even the mothers who had economic freedom.[72]

A sixth regnal year (1257 A.D.) record of Sundara Pandya I's (1251-1268 A.D.) inscription available in the steps of the tank near the **Mangala Theertham** of the Tirumalai Kadambar temple of Narthamalai refers to the grant of 10 **ma** of land to the 10 **Dēvaradiyārs** for their dedicated services to the religious pursuits. The following were the 10 **Dēvaradiyārs** who obtained the benefit offered by the king through the **Kanakku** of Madapathiyan Sevoor.

1. Periya Nachchiyar - 1 ma
2. Sellandar - 1 ,,
3. Perra Nachchiyar - 1 ,,

[69] **Ibid.,** No.32
[70] 342 of 1907
[71] 62 of 1928
[72] **Ibid.,** 1927.

4. Nallathai - 1 ,,

5. Nambikku Nachchiyar - 1 ,,

6. Kasanthu Nachchiyar - 1 ,,

7. Periya Nachchiyar - 1 ,,

8. Piravikkunallar - 1 ,,

9. Natchiyandar - 1 ,,

10. Nalla Thayar - 1 ,,

This grant was approved by **urar** and 30 **Vattathu Bharathar.**[73] One Pandy Thevar's daughter Nalla Pillai Perumal too obtained a land as **kudininga devadanam*.**[74] The Thiruvengaivassal Viyasapuriswara temple inscription refers to the dancing girl who obtained a **devadanam** land and other privileges.[75] They attached importance to the **Tali** of renowned family girls.[76] **Mangalanan** of **Vanpadayar** Deviyar has also venerated.[77] Thus the importance assigned to **tali** reveals that it was a traditional pride attached with women.

The same could be attested by the inscription of the 15th regnal year (1273 A.D.) inscription of Maravarman Kulasekara (1268-1308 A.D.) and a boundary is demarcated by citing the well of Samaramalagiyal. (FN.194) The very same inscription refers to the hereditary possession of the land of a **Dēvaradiyār** Nachchi, daughter of Dukkayandi.[78] Such facts expose the property rights of women approved by the authorities of the state. It is also worth to note that the rights and privileges enjoyed by women were all maintained by state authorities.

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[73] **Ibid.,** 620.
* Edowment to temple, of lands already in the occupation of cultivating tenants.
[74] **Ibid.,** 624.
[75] **Ibid.,** 639.
[76] **Ibid.,** 651.
[77] **Ibid.,** 679
[78] **Ibid.,** 486.

A 32nd regnal year (1300 A.D.) inscription of the Pandya Kulasekara (1268-1308) reveals that even ladies were gifted **irayili** lands for their maintenance.[79] In the same way the 11th year (1262 A.D.) inscription of Śundara Pāndya (1251-1262 A.D.) mentions about the land gift as **kudininga devanam** and **nilavilayavanam** to a **Dēvaradiyār** called Alagiya varedar who was the daughter of Kariyar, a **Dēvaradiyār** attached to the Eswar Swamy temple of Perumanadu. This suggests the hereditary social nature of the **Dēvaradiyārs** attached to the temple.[80] It is obvious that they were maintaining their reputation in the society by their own personal traits.

It is also worth to note that the women possessed paddy fields and a lady dancer called Thiruvathasaman Alagiyal too enjoyed such rights as she was associated with that temple.[81] The **Dēvaradiyārs** were given tanks, fields, **natham** and **nathampal** as territories to be possessed by them and they reveal the social importance assigned to them.[82]

Dēvaradiyār Amajalvi Umayandal, had donated paddy to the Eswara temple of Kulathur.[83] Due to their capabilities and economic status the **Dēvaradiyārs** exposed their religious and generous sentiments.

The **Dēvaradiyārs** were given reverence by endowments such as houses, paddy fields and she was the first to receive the respects from the temple.[84]

The Mukundeswarar temple of Kodmbalur too had its own **Dēvaradiyār** as given below and they were also granted lands and paddy for their services. Valithumai Perumal Adaikkalamkathar, Meyyar and Valithumai were the three **Dēvaradiyārs** as mentioned earlier.[85] The donations assigned to the **Dēvaradiyārs** of temples expose their meritorious position in the temple.

[79] **Ibid.,** 410
[80] **Ibid.,** 442
[81] **Ibid.,** 486
[82] **Idem.**
[83] **Ibid.,** 515
[84] **Ibid.,** 710.
[85] **Ibid.,** 718.

The Sundararaja Perumal temple inscription of Ponnamaravathi mentions that the **dēvaradiyārs** of that temple called Mallayi and Ulagudaya Nachi were dedicated to that position by the **urar** when they lost their prestige. Further they were given lands and houses.[86] So the common public too venerated the **Dēvaradiyārs** due to their dedicatd activities.

When there was no **Dēvaradiyār** for the Bhumiswara temple of Rangiyam, a lady called Udayammai was made as the **Dēvaradiyār** and was given the titte **Naluthikkumvenramanikkam**. She has given a house and land. This was approved by the **Sri Pandarathar** and **Urār**.[87] The importances of the **Dēvaradiyārs** are highlighted by the inscriptions. Thus the **Dēvaradiyār** were the bridge between the society and temple and maintained their status. As such the **Dēvaradiyārs** Sandanattai Alagulal and her sister Malayal were the daughter of **Dēvaradiyār** too received such facilities.[88] It was also a custom among all the temples to have **dēvaradiyārs** and they were also appointed and dedicated by parents.[89]

The public were also so much interested in having **dēvaradiyārs** attached to the temple.[90] There was a custom of having a land as **Dēvadimaikani**.[91] So there prevailed an appreciable position for women. The Melur Lakshminarayana Perumal temple inscription reveals that two **Dasis** and two servants were given lands for their services in the temple and also for cleaning the **nandavanam** as well as the temple. Those **saravamanya** grants were issued mainly to do their work in the temple.[92] The temple activities were also mostly centered on the **Dēvaradiyār** as availabel in the inscriptions.

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[86] **Ibid.,** 793.
[87] **Ibid.,** 814.
[88] **Ibid.,** 817.
[89] **Ibid.,** 826.
[90] **Ibid.,** 841.
[91] **Ibid.,** 867.
[92] **Ibid.,** 904.

When one Maluva Kumarappan committed suicide by taking poision to avoid problems, the **urar** came forward to gift a land to Nadia, daughter of Periyan Peraiyur Parayan. This land gift was called as **udirappatty.**[93] In the same way **Kalangathu Kanda Manickam**, a **Dēvaradiyār** of the Alagiyasemisuramudaya Nayanar temple of Keelaikkurichchi the temple authorities offered her **madapparru** and she was allowed to enjoy all the incomes of that land such as **Erkadamai, Pokkadamai, Tharikkadamai,** the house, the cattle and **amanji uliyam** of the workers.[94] This too will exhibit the reverence enjoyed by a **dēvaradiyār** of the temple. It is also worth to note that at times of calamities and critical situations the temples and administration came to the rescue of affected women. This could be attested even by another inscripation available in the Nageswarasamy temple of Kumbakonam which states that one Thimmannan, son of **Settu Raya Manickam**, the **Dēvaradiyār** of that temple had assigned grants due to his mother

The **Dēvaradiyārs** were always generous and philanthropic. As seen earlier the **Dēvaradiyāl** of the Thirumalai kadambur Nayinar temple of Narthamalai was of that nature.[95]

An undated record of the Viygagrapurisvara temple at Thiruvengaivasal indicates that Brahmani Bahemi and dancing girls were granted lands as **dēvadanam.** As they were **Dēvaradiyārs** of that temple in lieu of the land obtained by them, the recipients had to pay **kadamai** a land tax for that. This transaction was executed at the request of the ladies. As such the placement of women in land transcation and also in a recognized place will be attested by it.[96]

They also donated lands as **Dēvadana iraiyili**. They even donated lands in the name of their family members for their own prosperity. When one Atkondan, a

[93] **Ibid.,** 927.
[94] **Ibid.,** 953.
[95] **Ibid.,** 1110.
[96] **Ibid.,** 639.

brother of a **Dēvaradiyār**, engaged in **ṅava kandam** or killing himself by cutting his neck, the **Dēvaradiyār** Porralvi to expiate his sin donated a land as **iraiyili.**[97]

It is obvious that the **Dēvaradiyārs**, who were associated with the temples with the concurrence of the rulers and temple authorities, were given a high regard in the society during the Pandya, Chola as well as in the subsequent Vijayanagar and Nayak periods. As they had donated a lot, as seen earlier, one could estimate their virtues and qualities. Due to their dedicated service to the temple and contribution to fine arts they were high.

So far, how the Devaradiyar system came into existence and the role and function of Devaradiars are explained.

[97] **Ibid.,** 178

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

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The Tamil society's multifaceted and multidimentional nature is reflected by many of the inscriptions of different rulers and they are mostly donative in character. The analysis of the position of women as depicted in the inscriptions reveals that they were maintaining their own individualistic character and also led by customary practices and traditional approaches. No details about the entire women folk are available. Only the facts about the Queens and **dēvaraḍiyārs** and the contributions of women of different social status at a limited level alone are available. They are said to have witnessed many ups and downs in the society. Anyhow the facts revealed by the inscriptions testify to the qualities of women and their devoted nature.

During the ancient and medieval period the inscriptions reveal that women were the adherents of the customary practices and traditions of the Tamil social order. Through out the ages their position was not at all an underestimated one. As the inscriptions are permanent and original source materials for writing authentic history they speak about women of different orders such as **Dēvaradiyārs**. Though the commitment of **śati** or self immolation exposed their fascination and love towards their husbands and also their attachment towards monogamy, it is evident that there prevailed a specific customary practice called **śati**. They were known for their affinity for their families and their services. It is evident that the Tamil society was a patriarchal one and a male dominating one. As the women were biologically inferior to men and as they showed no sign to dominate men in any respect their position was a subservient one. They had no opportunity to be contradictory to the existing social taboos. They found no scope for involving themselves in any economic activities except of transacting lands of temples. Except as servant maids to queens they served as slaves. They committed themselves as slaves of God. Even due to

economic reasons they were even sold as slaves to temples to carryout various services minor and mean in the temples. The women during the **Śangam** age were called **pay pendir** or **pey mahalir** or priestesses. But at a later date no such positions were entrusted to women. Though they were called as **Kadaisiyar, Eyirriyar, Ulathiyar, Pulathiyar, Adal Kuttiyar, Kodichchi, Kodiyar, Kondimagalir, Siladiyar, Silvalai Virali, Tiruvin Seyyol, Inakolundu, Toriya Mahalir, Toriya Madanthai, Nulaimahal, Nataga Magalir, Nataga Kanigai, Nataga Madanthai, Paruthippendir, Panichi, Pān Magal, Poidal Mahalir, Mayaval, Mudirpendir, Varaivin Mahalir, Vanava Mahalir, Vilaipendir** etc., were the different types of women of the **Śangam** age. But such traditional calling of women found missing in the inscriptions of the subsequent periods belonging to Pallavas, Pandyas, Chōlas, Vijayanagar rulers and Nayaks. It is evident that due to the arrival of the **Bhakthi** movement during the eighth century A.D started by the Saiva Nayanmars and Vaishnava Alvārs, and also due to the changes in the political and religious conditions, the social set up too met with transitions and transformations in the subsequent periods. Further the multi individualistic and distructive nature of the women was also shrinking. While, no much detail are available in the **Śangam** classics, regarding the property rights of women, the inscriptions exhibit the economic affluency of the women of the later periods due to their involvement in economic pursuits such as sale, purchase and transfer of lands.

After the termination of the **Śangam** age, when the Kalabhra interregnum took place in the field of politics new changes were introduced at all levels. In the **Tondaimandalam** region, from the fallen ashes of the Sathavahanas, the early Pallava rule came up which formed the basis for the Greater Pallava rule from the seventh century onwards. In the **Nadu nādu,** the imperial Chōla rule was leading its own way and that too was succeeded by the Chalukya Chōla rule. In the same way in the Pāndya country the Pāndyas of the first Pāndyan Empire came up. Then it was

followed by the Pāndya rulers of the later Pāndya lineage. The Hoysalas, the Vijayanagar rulers, the Muslim rulers and the Nayak rulers also estabilished their rules in the Tamil country one after the other. The changed political set up had its own echo over the social set up in Tamilnadu. So in the absence of any literary evidence, when compared with the inscriptions of earlier periods, the changes are highlighted by the sources such as inscriptions.

The Queens of the rulers of the different dynasties were occupying equal status with the rulers in the throne. But the chief queen alone had that privilege. The rulers followed the policy of polygarmy due to diplomatic political situations. Even then only one was the chief queen. Nirubatunga's Bahur Copper plate too attests that his mother Śangha, a Rashtrakuta princess was known for her wisdom and contribution to art. The women were pioneers in enabling others to tread on their heels with regard to philanthropic and charitable activities. The queens constructed temples of their own and converted the brick temples into stone structural temples. They had subscribed wealth and sheep to the temples for the burning of perpetual lamps. They had executed many welfare activities such as the making of irrigation canals and digging of tanks. The queens served as means for their husbands to maintain their political status. The rulers were also keen on maintaining the social and political ranks of their queens and respected their ancestors. The tradition of **mahatkōdai** and **stridhanam** existed even then among the royal familis and the society too did not deviate from that tradition of the early period.

The queens had their own influences over the rulers and enabled them to indulge in noble and charitable acts. Due to the free hand assigned to them they announced lot of grants to temples for the effective functioning of the temples. They are sources to estimate the pious nature and devotion of the queens in making grants. Then queens had their own establishments, attendants and servantmaids, who too enjoyed economic freedom due to their wealthy nature. They had their own grants in

lieu of their services and were also known for their devotion. The **velaikkāriś** served as body guards and personal securities to the rulers and they were loyal and sincere to their masters at all times. They were even ready to offer their lives for their master. The kings had appointed **dēvaradiyārs** and **pendir pandaram**. Furthar the women were ordered to execute dance and **kuttu** during festive occasions. The queens served as models for the wives of the state servants and empowered them to engage in executing noble deeds. They granted stones and pillars to construct temples and money to burn the perpetual lamps in the temples. The women were purchased as slaves by the members of the royal families. There prevailed a difference between the women of royal orders and women of common public. The queens as well as the public ladies were always pious. The queens even donated paddy and conducted **tulabāra** and **hiranyagharbā** sacrifices for their own personal and family welfare. So dedication to the temple and adherence to traditions were common features. In this regard the **dēvaradiyārs** attached to the temples were not an exception. The queens like their husbands venerated the elders and the predecessors. The queens too offered gifts for clearing the **stridhānam** to be paid to women. Though there were many queens for a ruler there prevailed unity and cordiality among them. The kings maintained the religious observances in tact. The public were interested in celebrating the birth days of the queens. The prevalence of polygamy never hindered the peace of the royal family. No references about polyandry are available in any of the insĉriptions of Tamilnadu. The queens made endowments by way of deposits and the accrued interest was to be utilized for executing different activities in the temple. The queens fostered the conduct of many special rituals on specific asterisms. When many welfare activities such as **vaykkal, vadhi** and **chery** were named after the Queens one can estimate the prestigious position of queens. The queens contributed to the erection of a **tumbu** (sluice) in a tank and it testifies to the interest of the queens in the welfare of the people.

Various inscriptions available in the temples reveal that the tradition of appointing women in the services of the palace was a common feature and they were entrusted with landed properties. This traditional approach continued even during the period of the Nayaks too. The **dēvaradiyārs** appointed in the temple were known for their hereditary possessions. Sometimes the **dēvaradiyārs** were permitted to get married. The queens made arrangements for fetching water to bath the idol in the temple. Even grooves **(Nandavanams)** were also established. The servantmaids of the queens carried out all the activities in the name of the queens. They even apportioned finance and landed properties for feeding the Brahmins and sages through the temples. To commemorate the generous deeds of the deceased elders they were particular in avoiding the interruption in the accomplishments of the rituals. While offering sheep as grants to temples, pots were also provided to carry water for the bath of the deity. Such noble deeds enabled even ordinary common women to pursue their foot steps and•their economic prosperity too encouraged their generous deeds.

The queens were accustomed to be by the side of the ruler while the latter was executing the administrative activities. The queens of all the dynasties enjoyed such a privilege. But with regard to the Chera country one should note that the custom of **marumakka dayam** was in vogue there. So the status of women of that region was superior when compared with the queen and women folk of other regions.

All the political inscriptions are mostly donative in character. But few of them exhibit the welfare measures undertaken not only by queens but also by women of common nature. Only with the involvement and support of public, governmental and temple authorities the different kinds of land transactions were administered. Even the **dēvaradiyārs,** attached to the temples, had to depend upon the temple authorities such as **dēvakanmis** in carrying out their charitable activities. The rulers too approved and acknowledged the grants made by women of any nature by allowing tax

remissions. So the women had the recognition among rulers, officials and common public. The purchase of lands from 20 persons for widening the car street was also a method adopted by women for the well being of the public. Such transactions were executed with the officials of the state.

The kings, to avoid social problems, to assist the economically downtrodden and to help the parents who were unable to pay dowry and **stridhānam,** made arrangements for them for a better life by purchasing them as **dēvaradiyārs** and housed them in the temples. As the **dēvaradiyārs** too enjoyed the right of having land transactions for different purposes, the **Koil kanakku, Śrikaryam Ceyvōr, Maheswarakankani Maha śabayōr, Urkkanakku, Thānathār, Dēvakanmigal** were all involved in such activities. The financial transactions were made only with the **sripandāram** or state treasury. The interest was known as **palisai.**

The **dēvaradiyārs** attached to the temples were not only pious but also were experts in fine arts such as dance and music. The kings of the ancient and medieval periods were for promoting the fine arts such as music, dance, drama, **Kuthu** etc. So that the kings, through the **perumakuri mahāsabhā** announced a grant called **kuttukkani.** The queens assigned **śalabogam** to be used by physicians. The **Vaidhyabhogam** is also associated with such activities. Silver plates, copper wares, golden kalasams were also donated to temples by women. Amounts were allotted for women for the purchase of following items: sarees, oil for lamps, hand pounded rice, ghee, oil, turmeric mustard, grains, curd, curd rice, betel, arecanut etc. All such things were offered to the deities. The women were offering donations for the elders during new moon, **puśam** and **dēvadaśi** and other such specific asteisms. Thus the women had righs and privileges for the spending of the granted amounts as desired. The husband used to include his wife in the land transactions.

It was also a customary practice to execute their donations by keeping a witness. Mixed marriages were also common between high and low caste men and women. The terms **Ariyal Vayakkal** and **Nalapillaiperral nancei** too will disclose the status of women. The tradition of weaving the **tali** continued to survive. The calling of the queens as **Bhuvana muludayal, Tribhuvana muludayal, Ulagudyal, Avani muludayal, Dharani muludayal, Mādēvi, Perumadēvi** will highlight the reverence assigned to queens. The capture of women and princesses as war captives too widened the scope of making women as slaves or adoption of polygamy by the rulers.

From the various records attributed to different periods and rulers much importance is assigned to **dēvaradiyārs** who were appointed hereditarily by the rulers in the temples. They were subordinated to temple authorities and priests. They got land grants, food and stay facilities by the state. They were experts in five arts. They danced during **Mahābhooja** and other festivals. They were called as **patiyilar, taliyilar, Ishabhatalay**. It was a custom to accept the position of **dēvaradiyār** families. They had even the title called **Talaikkōli**. They played a multifaceted role in the society. They had links with the rulers, temples, administrators and public. They had a free hand in economic and charitable pursuits. There are references about the married life led by the **dēvaradiyārs**. They received **śarvamanya** from the rulers. The kings made arrangements to the temples to purchase women as **devaradiyars**. The temple authorities such as **Kōil kanakku, Śrikaryam ceyvōr, Maheswarakkankāni, Mahāsabayōr, Urkanakku, Dēvakanmigal** had to superise the rights which they obtained from the state. The tradition of **Pōttukkattudal** was yet another tradition associated with the **dēvaradiyārs**. The **palisai** or interest obtained from the various deposits assisted them in getting their needs satisfied. They were renowned for their pious deeds and noble and charitable acts. They were experts in enacting dramas for that they obtained

kuthukkani and **Iraiyili** lands. In general they had the right to enjoy the **śarvamanya dēvadānam** and **kadamai** also. They were provided with houses. Even by appealing to the rulers the temples had the **dēvaradiyārs**. They had their own titles such as **koil pandāram**. The importance assigned to them allowed them to enjoy the **madapparru, erkkadamai, tharikkadamai, pokkadamai** etc., and they were entrusted to them in return of the services executed by them in the temple. The **dēvaradiyārs** in general were so particular and keen in maintaining the status of the temple even by gifting the things required for the temple. As servants of God their position in the society was not at all denounced. They even made arrangements for the procession of the deities during festive occasions and assisted the feeding of the Brahmins. They gifted **kāśu, panam, pon, palamsalagai, kalanjupon, palamsalagai achu**. The lands assigned to them comprised of tanks, fields, **natham, nathampal** etc. The tradition of donating **dēvaradiyār** to the temple continued even during the Nayak period. The titles **Nalu thikkum venra mānickam** and **Rāyas** to the **Dēvaradiyār** will highlight their reveared status. If at all they committed any mistake it was not at all magnified. The **dēvaradiyārs,** eventhough dedicated to the temple, had commendable respects for their mothers and family members. The term **adavallan** used to measure paddy. The **dēvaradiyārs** assigned importance to dance. The **dēvaradiyārs** served no cause for any religious disparities and differences and no specific details about the castes to which they belonged to.

The position of women was generally appreciable. The continuation of the tradition of **śati,** the women's denial to attend to the court for their failure to pay the taxes will disclose their reputed status. Further no facts, which create an aversion in the minds of the people towards women too will authenticate it. The women too enjoyed the rights and privileges to announce grants and donations to different temples due to their piety and generosity. The dancing girls of the temples were fed by the donation arranged by a lady. It was a common feature among women to donate for

the burning of perpetual lamps in the temples. They created deposits and announced endowments and the interest accrued from them were utilized for the execution of welfare measures in the temple.

Offering **Stridhanam** was a common practice and that caused distress to the parents of a girl. **Talipputtu** was yet another tradition associated with the marriages. It was a customary practice to register their marriages as protective measure to maintain the status of the women and also to preserve the practice of monogamy. The **adula salais** (free hospitals) donated by a lady was beneficial for the society for getting employments for women as nurses.

The women slaves served as servant maids in palaces. They even had their share in their father's property. As they possessed lands they had the access to dispose them in anyway they decided. They too were pious and generous, hence they indulged in charitable and philanthropic activities. Their main contributions were mostly for the temples. Numbers of inscriptions attest this fact. Even the lands assigned to them as **srartham** and **samaskara dakshina** were donated. They venerated Siva Brahmins. Some of them maintained dancing girls and some of them were even donated to the temple. Even the female members of a single family attached themselves to a temple mainly to carry out the services to God. The terms such as **kadal sulnda par mathar, kalaima mathar, Sri mathar** etc., will testify to their venerable nature of the women.

In the temples they served as assistants to the learned scholars attached to the temple, maintained the cattle in the temple. At the same time women of wealth gifted sheep, costlier jewels to the deities and idols of the temples. They were engaged in the services such as dehusking of paddy and cleaning the temple. But not all women were engaged in such activities. Due to economic considerations they were involved in floor cleaning, lighting lamps, flying whisks. The servant maids

were even possessed by chieftains and they were called **velaikkaris**. Individual private ladies contributed for the renovations of the temples. Women of different castes and communities without any disparity dedicated themselves to the religious commitments.

The women had the right to receive **stridhanam** and the right to use double conches at the time of their marriages. They too had their share in the construction of the temples and for that they donated even stones for pillars and corbel. The women were law abiding and executed the donations as decided by rules and regulations. They had the right to purchase and pledge lands for charitable purposes. The women were even sold to temples as slaves. It was a custom among women of few even to arrange for feasts at the time of the marriages in the houses of **Maharaya**. The husbands had venerated the womenfolk of his family and for the welfare and well being had announced donations to the construction of the temples. They even constructed the **madaippalli.** (Kitchen)

The women were dancers and singers and they were called by the names such as **adupathiram** and **padupathiram** respectively. The women were not spent things and saved money to be used for different noble purposes. They utilised their savings for the sake of providing pavements in the **prakaras** and also for the conduct of the renovation of the temple. Women of all categories indulged in such noble pursuits. They even covered the flag mast with copper plates. They stood for providing public welfare facilities at times of festivals and stood for the maintenance of the society. In the temples also different grades of women were employed for different purposes and their role was a hereditary one. Even after the death of the husband a sum obtained by way of fine for his killing was appropriated to the temple and the widow. The amount obtained by the sale of a land was divided even among the women of a family. While the sale transaction was undertaken by a lady it was a custom to have her father or brother as guardian to execute the transaction. With the

use of a deed called **anniya namakarana theettu** the sale deed was carried out in the name of a different individual. They gifted lands, paddy, **kāśu,** house sites etc., for making ornaments to the deities, to provide **neivedyam** to the temple and also to offer noon meals to the Brahmin of that place. The women themselves stood as witnesses while the sale of the old ornaments of the deities were undertaken in the temple.

While this brighter side of economic prosperity prevailed there were women who sold themselves as slaves to relieve themselves from their economic distresses. This act of sales was substantiated by the execution of the deed called **alvilai pramana isaivu theettu**. In the same way the marriages were also registered by a deed called **talipputtu pramanam**. Though the deed called **kurrolai** the properties were divided by women. So to give authenticity and to maintain the status of women everything was kept in black and white.

The women servants of the temple were called **kōvil pendugal** or **pendatti**. Though references are available regarding intercaste marriages and inter community marriages the high caste people hesitated to give their daughters in marriage to a low caste man. The condition of the women of lower order was pathetic.

The women singers of sacred verses in the temples were respected more than the dancers attached to the temple. For the maintenance of the chastity of women, the men who caused sexual problems were fined. The women were known for their act of Justice. They were not given severe and harsh punishments. The women were appointed even to assist the **dēvaradiyārs** of the temples. They even contributed to the establishment of mutts. The gifts and donations offered by women to the temples were received by **pathamulathan** and **pattudai panchāchārya devakanmigal**. The women even arranged for joint donations. In the absence of a male issue to the parents, the daughters carried out the duties of sons. They even

had their rights to express their own views in the public assemblies. But they were not given position in the local administration such as **ur, grama** etc.

Thus the status and position of Tamil women as depicted by the inscriptions reveal that their position was not at all constant due to fluctuating conditions. Their position was not at all a disreputed or demoralized one. But their position was always a subordinated one to law, justice, social norms and traditions as well as customs. They were always pious and devotional in their attitudes. So they involved themselves in philanthropic and charitable activities, which mostly centered on temples and deities. They even showed their attachments and associations with Jaiminis. They never deviated from the family affinities. Their economic freedom was congenial and conducive for various transactions of landed properties. They maintained their individualities without tampered by any other aspects. They were recognized and regarded by elderly members, government officials, kings, temple authorities and others. Thus their personal pursuits and identities assigned them a venerable position in the social ladder of the Tamil country as revealed by the inscriptions. Further they were not meddled with any kind of adverse effects. They were always standing on their own legs with regard to donations and charities.

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APPENDICES

Appendix – I

List of women, found in inscriptions

Appendix - I

List of women found in inscriptions

Royal Women

No.	Ins.No.	Royal Women
1.	13	Perumbidugu Perundevi
2.	14	Anupama, Varaguna, Karrali
3.	19	Paliyili Sriyanangai
4.	19	Nangaiyar Nava
5.	45	Varaguna Natti
6.	47	Nakkam Pulliyar
7.	52	Nangai Nan-Daviyar
8.	90	Pasur - Nangaiyar
9.	98	Vasuki-Nangai
Vol.II	6	Kundavaiyar
	11 & 48	Trailokyamahadevi
	42 & 46	Cholamahadevi
	42	Soramahadeviyar
	44	Abhimanavalli
	51 & 53	Panjavan Mahadevi
Vol. III	103	Iravi Nili
	137	Viranarayaniyar
	141	Sembiyan Madeviyar
	192	Villavan Mahadeviyar
	194	Tribhuvana Mahadeviyar
Vol V	521	Lokamadeviyar
	639	Vavanan Madeviyar
	645	Puvanamuludaiyal, Mukkohilanadigal
	975	Viranarayani Cholamahadevi
	523	Paluvettarayar Cholamadeviyar
	547	Valavan Madevi

	599	Thennavanmadeviyar
	601	alias Narayana Nangari Nangaiyar
VI	92	Madhurantaki
	73	Tyagavalli
XII	64	Kadavan Madeviyar alias Prittivimanikkam
	74	Viramahadeviyar
	91	Madevi Adigal
XIII	104	Malada Madeviyar
	224	Viman Kundavaiyar
	225	Adittan Kodaippirattiyar
	247	Nangai Sattaperumanar
XIX	149	Kilavan Desappugal
	311	Pattan Danatongiyar
	383	Kamapparasiyar alias
		Svarna Mahadeviyar
	405	Aruran Ambalattadigatar Urattayan Sorabbaiyar
	407	Gopass Sakappu
XXIII	46	Valluvar Deviyar
XXIV	61	Neriyan Madevi
	141	Nunkama Mahadevi
	153	Deviyar Somaladeviyar
	259	Umadevi
	269	Kamaladevi
	409	Oduva Tirumalai Amman Chikka-Venkatadri

Devaradiyars

No.	Ins.No.	Devaradiyars
1.	18	Sattanammai
2.	33	Appi Singam
3.	88	Sendan Seyyavaymani
4.	97	Marundi Andaval
5.	128	Elunattunangai
6.	139	Santikkutti Acci Umaiyal
7.	152	Tillaivanamudaiyal Madavalli
8.	178	Perralvi
9.	196	madapilai aliar Alalasundaramanikkam
10.	223	Alkondi - Kudilanginal
11.	274	Udaiyal Oliyal
12.	286	(1) Alagiya Nacci Pillandal
		(2) Tiruvenaligai Manikkatthal
13.	319	Santikkutti Naccimalaiyal
14.	366	(1) Nachchi - (2) Durgaiyandal
15.	442	(1) Azahiyavaradham (2) Kariyar
16.	515	Ammai Alvi Umaiyandal
17.	529	Periyanacci Thukkai
18.	553	Tiruvambalam Piriyadar - Alagiya Pendir
19.	666	Enavvaiya Nacciyar
20.	686	Adamaiyalahiyar
21.	710	Adaikkalangatta Manikkattal
22.	718	(1) Meyyarai (2) Vazhiththunai (3) Vazhiththunai Perumal
23.	794	(1) Ulahundai Nacci (2) Alahapperumal
24.	814	Udaiyammai
25.	817	(1) Sandanaththayaliyar (2) Manikki (3) Malaiyar.
26.	867	(1) Cholachchi (2) Pallavaraya Manikkattal
27.	870	Ammai
28.	899	(1) Muludumudaiyal (2) Valayi
29.	953	Kalongadakanda Manikkattal

Slaves

No.	IPS.	Slaves
1.	459	(1) Sevi (2) Siral (3) Manri (4) Valaththi (5) Ponni (6) Tholuthi

Goddesses

No.	IPS.	Goddesses
1.	14	(1) Kamala - Lakshmi (2) Sarasvati
		(3) Girija - Parvati (4) Umaparameswari
2.	78	Kadukal
3.	84	Tirumakal Polap Perunilaccelvi
4.	100	Tambirattiyar
5.	140	Periyanacciyar
6.	163	Korravai - Durga Tiru - Lakshmi Kali
7.	164	Tiruppalliyarai - Nacciyar
8.	166	Iraivivar - Parvati
9.	180	Thirumagalum jayamagalum
10.	182	Kalaimadum Pudalmadam
11.	196	Akiolandanayaki
12.	198	Tirukamakotta Nacciyar
13.	247	Pirattimar
14.	256	Poomaruviya Thiruma Andaiyur
15.	280	Saththi Nachchiyar
16.	394	Nallamangaiyar
17.	413	Tirukkamakkottattu Nallapillai periya Nachchiyar
18.	421	Tiruvaga - Nachchiyar
19.	443	Alagapperumal - Nachchiyar
20.	706	Nayaka Nachchiyar, Thiruvi Nachchiyar
21.	806	Thiruveethi Nachchiyar
22.	848	Nachchiyar Atchivalli
23.	868	Pidari
24.	876	Pulvaikatchi - Amman.

Appendix – II

Midieval Period Measurement

Appendix - II

MIDIEVAL PERIOD MEASUREMENT

1. Land Measurement

1. Ma : measure of Land, measures tended to differ from one region to another, but according to the Tanjore measurement 20 ma was equal to I veli, i.e., 1 ma was equivalent to 0.33 acres or 14,000 sqr.ft.

2. Kuli : measure of Land. According to Tanjore measurement, 1 kuli was equal to 0.0033 acres on 144 sq.ft.

3. Veli : Land measure, roughly 61/4 acres

2. Quntity Measurement

360	Paddy	Sevidu
5	Sevidu	Alakku
2	Alakku	Ulakku
2	Ulukku	Uri (1/2 padi)
16	Uri	Marakkal (Kuruni)
2	Marakkal	Pathakku
2	Pathakku	Thuni
3	Thuni	Kalam

3. Weight Measurement

2	Kunrimani	Manjadi
10	Manjadi	Kalanju
16	Kalanjn	Palam

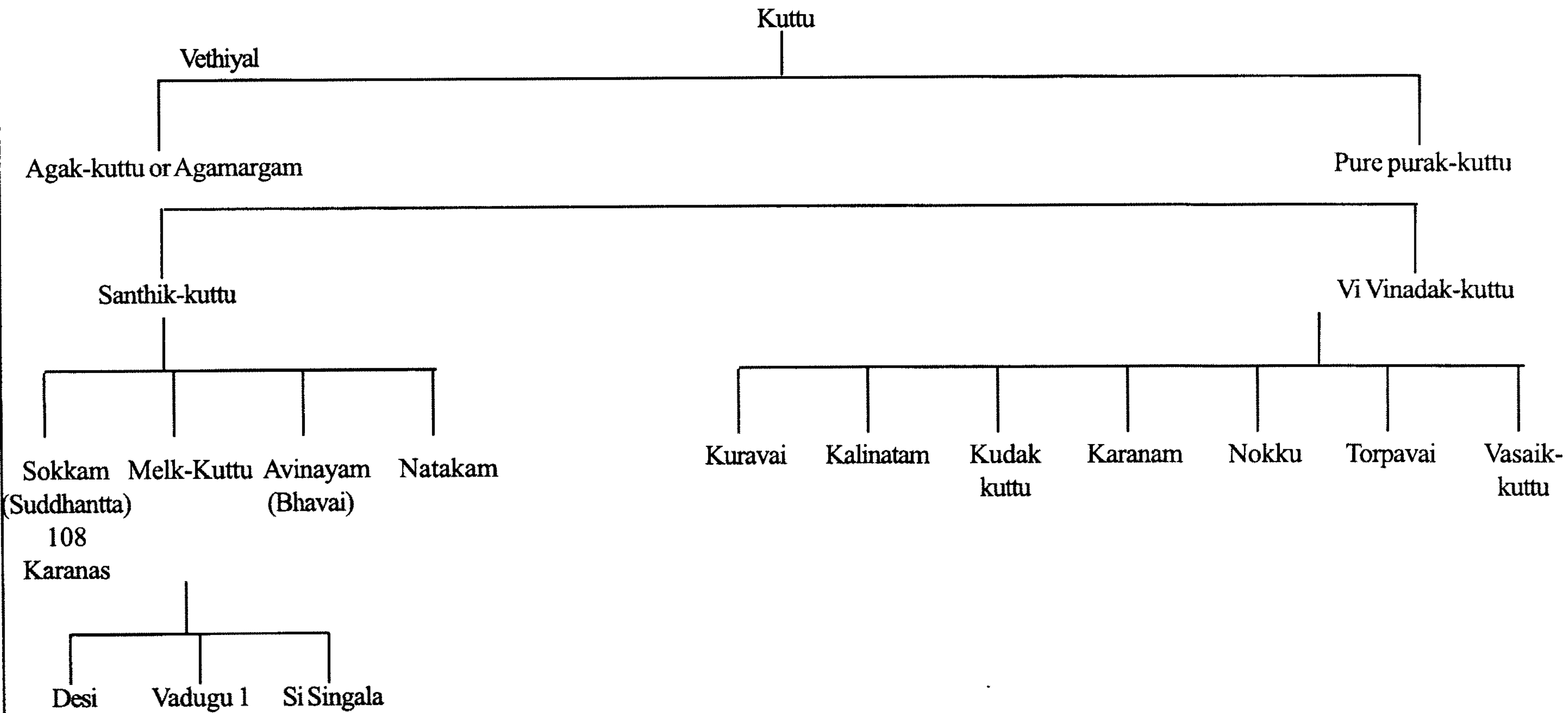
4. Linear measurement

8	Thorai	Viral
24	Viral	1 malam

Appendix – III

Kinds of Dance

Appendix - III



Appendix – IV

Copies of inscriptions from SII Volumes

Appendix - IV

Copies of inscriptions from SII Volumes

S.I.I. Vol.I No.56

About Dowry

III.—INSCRIPTIONS AT AND NEAR VIRIÑCHIPURAM.

No. 56. INSIDE THE FRONT GOPURA OF THE VIRIÑCHIPURAM TEMPLE, SECOND INSCRIPTION TO THE RIGHT.

This inscription is dated during the reign of Vîrapratâpa-Devarâya-mahârâja (*of* Vijayanagara) and in the *Viśvâvasu* year, which was current after the expiration of the Śaka year 1347. It refers to a question of the sacred law (*dharma*) of the *Brâhmaṇas*, which was settled by the *Brâhmaṇas* of the kingdom of Paḍaivîḍu, among whom Karṇâṭa, Tamiṛ, Telugu and Lâṭa *Brâhmaṇas* are mentioned. Their representatives signed an agreement to the effect, that henceforth marriages among their families had only to be concluded by *kanyâdâna*, i.e., that the father had to give his daughter to the bridegroom gratuitously. Both the father who accepted money, and the bridegroom who paid money for the bride, should be subject to punishment by the king and to excommunication from their caste. This practice was evidently adopted on the authority of the canonical works on sacred law, which condemn in strong terms the payment of money for the bride, and use the term *âsura-vivâha* for a marriage thus concluded. The four forms of marriage permitted to *Brâhmaṇas* are mere varieties of the marriage by *kanyâdâna*.

To the end of the inscription a large number of signatures of *Brâhmaṇas* are attached. This part of the original is obliterated to such an extent that a satisfactory transcript cannot be given. In some cases, the places where the single *Brâhmaṇas* came from, are registered. As the identification of these localities might be useful for fixing the extent of the kingdom of Paḍaivîḍu, I subjoin those which may be read with certainty: Kalañjiyam, Kamalapâdam, Marudam, Maṅgalam, Araiyapâḍi, Kaṇṇamaṅgalam,[1] A[ga]ṭṭerippaṭṭu, Enâdapâḍi. Two other inscriptions mention Guḍiyâtam[2] and Vallam[3] as belonging to the kingdom of Paḍavîḍu[4] or Paḍaveḍu.[5] The kingdom of Paḍaivîḍu (*Paḍaiviṭṭu râjyam*) was called after the town of Paḍaivîḍu, now Paḍaveḍu in the Polûr Tâluqa of the North Arcot District.[6] According to two Vijayanagara inscriptions, it formed a district of Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam.[7] The name Paḍaivîḍu means "an encampment" and seems to owe its origin to a temporary camp of some king, around which a city arose in course of time.[8]

[1] With [illegible] [illegible] compare [illegible] [illegible] in line 21 of the Poygai inscription No. 62.

[2] According to Winslow, the *Mâmagam*, *Mâmâgam* or *Mâmâṅgam* (Sanskrit *Mahâmagha* or *Mahâmâgha*) is a bathing festival, celebrated every twelve years at Kumbhakoṇam. A festival called *Mahâmakham* or *Mâmâṅkam* used likewise to take place every twelfth year at Tirunâvâyi in Malabar; see Dr. Gundert's *Malayâḷam Dictionary*. The meaning of *mâmagam* and *iḍatturai* in the present inscription is not apparent.

[3] In this and other inscriptions, வெட்டி seems to stand for வெட்டியான், the lowest village servant, who is also called தோட்டி.

[4] The Uvachchas or Jonakas (*i.e.*, Yavanas) are a low tribe of Muhammadans; see Winslow.

[5] [illegible] means "raw rice" (Winslow). It is spelt [illegible] in line 4a of the south wall.

TEXT.

[1.] ஸுபமஸ்து

[2.] ஸ்வஸ்தி [||*] ஸ்ரீமன்மஹாராஜாதிராஜபரமேஸ்வரன ஸ்ரீ[வீ]ரப்ரதாபதேவராய-மஹாராஜ ப்ரு-

[3.] திவிராஜ்யம் பண்ணி அருளாநின்ற ஸகாப்தம் [illegible]ன் மேல் செல்லாநி[ன்*]ற விஸ்வாவஸு-

[4.] வருஷம் பங்குனி மீ க ௩ [illegible][ம்*] [illegible] [illegible]மையும் பெற்ற அமிறத்து[9] கால் படைவீடு இராஜ்யத்து

[5.] [illegible] [illegible][10] [illegible][ல]

[6.] [illegible] பண்ணி குடுத்தபடி இற்றை நாள் முதலாக இந்த-

[7.] ப்படைவீடு ராஜ்யத்து [illegible] கன்ன[டி]கர் தமிழ்ர்[11] தெலுங்கர் இவர்கள் முதலா-

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[1] This village is situated in the Ârṇi Jâgîr, about half-way between Ârṇi and Vellore; it is spelt "Kunnamangalam" in the official *List of Indian Post Offices*, Calcutta, 1886.

[2] Head-quarters of a tâlluqa of the North Arcot District.

[3] In the Vandavâśi Tâlluqa of the same district.

[4] *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XIII, p. 132. *Paḍaviḍu-râjya* occurs also in two inscriptions published by Dr. Oppert (*Madras Journal for* 1881, pp. 251 and 257); *Paṭaviṭa-râjya* in a grant of Śaka 1460, the *Vilambin* year, from Śrîperumbudûr (Sewell's *Lists*, Vol. II, p. 266), for the original of which I am indebted to Mr. J. Lee Warner, the Collector of Chingleput.

[5] Sewell's *Lists of Antiquities*, Vol. I, p. 170. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 169.

[7] The Padavedu inscription No. 81 mentions *Toṇḍai-maṇḍalattu Paḍaiviṭṭu râjyam*. According to the Koṇḍyâta grant (*Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XIII, p. 132) the *Paḍaviḍu-mahârâjya* belonged to the *Jayaṅkoṇḍa-Toṇḍa-maṇḍala*.

[8] Thus the present residence of the Sindhia at the foot of the Gwalior Fort still bears the name of Lashkar, i.e., "camp."

[9] Read அமுதத்து. [10] Read [illegible]. [11] Read தமிழர்.

S.I.I. Vol.III No.102 & 103

No. 102.—ON THE SOUTH WALL OF THE CENTRAL SHRINE IN THE MADHUVANESVARA TEMPLE AT TIRUKKALAVUR[1]

This record which is dated in the 24th year of Parântaka I. registers a gift of land for a lamp by a temple-woman of Jayabhimatali in Tañjâvûr, in the presence of king Pârakêsarivarman. Jayabhimatali, as the name of a temple in Tanjore, occurs in one of the inscriptions of the Brihadîsvara temple[2] which registers the gift of service-women to that temple by Râjarâja I.

TEXT

1 ஸ்வஸ்தி ஸ்ரீ [||*] மதிரைகொண்ட கோப்பரகேஸரிபன்மற்கு யாண்டு உ௰௪ ஆவது தி-
2 ருக்கருகாவூர் மஹாதேவற்கு தஞ்சாவூர் ஜயபீமதளி நக்கன் சந்திர-
3 தேவி கொ[ப]ப்பரகேசரிகூற்கு முன்பு திருக்கருகாவூர் தேவ[ர]தேவர்க்கு வ[ை]-
4 த்த வொசந்தவிளக்குக்கு நிசதம் உழக்கெ[ண்*]ணை எரிப்பதாக வை-
5 த்த விளக்கு வடவூர் வெங்காட்டுள் ஆவூர்நாட்டு வேளா[ர்] வைத்த திரு-
6 விளக்கு செ[ய்*]க்கு தென்பால்[3] இரண்டு மாவும் இதின் மேலை இ[ரண்]டு மாவும்
7 உள்வா[ய்]க்காலுக்கு தெற்கில் திடரும் திடல் மயக்கின அடைகலம்
8 இவ்வனைத்தும்[4] கொடுப்[5]ப கொண்டு சந்திராதித்தவற் ஒரு கெடாநா-
9 விளக்கு[6] [எ]ரிப்பதாக [||*] இது ப[ன்*]மாஹேசுவரரக்ஷை ||*]

TRANSLATION.

Hail! Prosperity! In the 24th year of *(the reign of)* king Parakêsarivarman, who took Madirai (Madura), Nakkan Śandirâdêvi *(attached to the temple)* of Jayabhimatali at Tañjâvûr gave in the presence of king Parakêsarivarman for burning regularly with *(one)* *ulakku* of oil *(one)* perpetual lamp placed *(by her)* in *(the temple of* Mahâdêva *(Śiva)* at Tirukkarugâvûr, two *mâ* of land to the south of the field for sacred lamp granted by Âvûr-nâṭṭu Vêḷâr at Vadavûr-Vengâḍu, two *mâ* *(of land)* to the west of this *(land)*, the mound to the south of *(the channel called)* Uḷvâykkâl and the enclosed field of the mound which has been made cultivable. Receiving all these lands, one perpetual lamp shall be burnt as long as the moon and the sun *(last)*. *(The assembly of)* all *Mâhêśvaras* shall protect this *(charity)*.

No. 103.—ON A SLAB BUILT INTO THE VERANDAH ROUND THE CENTRAL SHRINE OF THE ADHIPURISVARA TEMPLE AT TIRUVORRIYUR.[7]

This record which is dated in the 29th year of Parakêsarivarman Parântaka I. registers a grant of 30 *kalañju* of pure gold for a lamp to the temple of Mahâdêva at Tiruvoṟṟiyûr. The donor was Iravi Nîli, the daughter of the Chêra king Vijayarâgadêva. From the inscriptions published so far we do not know of any Chêra king of name Vijayarâga who was a contemporary of Parântaka. It has been noted above that Kôkkandaṉ Sthâṇu Ravi was a contemporary and riend of Râjakêsarivarman Âditya I., father of Parântaka I. Perhaps Vijayarâga (*i.e.*, Vijayarâghava), if at all he was an actual ruler of the Chêra country, might have succeeded Sthâṇu Ravi either as his son or his brother. The friendly relations that thus existed between the Chôḷas and the Chêras during the reigns of Âditya I. and Parântaka I. deserve to be noted.

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[1] No. 38 of 1910. [2] Above Vol. II, No. 66, p. 293. [3] தென்பால perhaps stands for தென்புறம். [4] Read அடைகலமும் இவ்வனைத்தும். [5] Cancel the letter ம. [6] Read விளக்கு. [7] No. 159 of 1912.

S.I.I. Vol.III No.210
About female descendants

No. 210.—Tirukkaḷar plate of Tribhuvanachakravartin Rajarajadeva.

This is the fourth inscription in the Tirukkaḷar set. It is engraved on the second side of the third plate and belongs to the 18th year of the reign of Tribhuvanachakravartin Râjarâjadêva. It records that some of the families of the donees, who received the gift made by Śivaṉ Tillainâyagaṉ of Taṉṉîrkuṉṟam in the twenty-eighth year of the reign of Kulôttuṅga-Chôla, the abolisher of tolls, ceased to have male members and that in consequence a question arising as to how the feeding pertaining to these families should be conducted in future, the Mâhêśvaras settled that the feeding stipulated in the grant to be done by the donees devolved on the female descendants as well and that arrangements were made in accordance with that order. The inscription may probably belong to the reign of Râjarâja II, though the distinguishing epithet of the king is missing and the characters appear to belong to a later period.

TEXT.

1 ஸ்வஸ்தி ஸ்ரீ[||*]திரிபுவ[னசக்கரவத்தி]கள் ஸ்ரீஇராஜராஜதேவற்[கு] யாண்டு பதினெ-
ட்டாவது நாள்
2 நூற்றெண்பதினா[ல் இரா]ஜேந்திரசோழவளநாட்டுப் புறங்கரம்பைநாட்டுத் திரு-
3 க்களர் முளைத்த மாதேவற்கு அமாவாசி எழுந்தருளி தேவரடியா..ர அமுது செய்வி-
4 க்கச் சுங்கந்தவுத்தருளின கோலொத்துங்கசோழதேவற்கு இருபத்தெட்டா[வ]-
5 து தண்ணிற்குன்றமுடையான் சிவந்தில்லைநாயகன் பக்கல் இத்தேவர் திருமடை-
6 [வி]ளாகத்திருக்கும் ஆண்டார்கள் உபையமாக கொண்ட நெல்லுக்கு அமுது செய்[வி]-
7 க்கும்படிக்கு முன்பு வெட்டின செப்பேட்டுபடியில் உபையங்கொண்டு அமு-
8 துசெய்வித்துவருகிற ஆண்டார்களில் ஆண்வழி அற்றுப் பெண்வழியா-
9 ன கொத்துக்கு அமுது செய்விக்கும்படி கனகராயரும் ஸ்ரீமாகேசுவர-
10 ரும் அறுதி பண்ணுகிற இடத்துப் பெ..ஊட்டுப் பெண்வழியும் வருமெ-
11 ன்று ஸ்ரீமாகேசுவரர் நிச்சயித்தமையில் இப்படி சம்மதித்துப் பெண்வழியி-
12 லார் இட்ட திட்டுப்படி ஆடவலான் பூர்வசிவனை பத்தநாயகப் பிச்சன் மக-
13 ளைக் கொண்ட கண்பெற்றான் மன்று நிறைந்தானான அன்பற்கடி-
14 யான் அமுது செய்விக்கும் பேர் மூன்று இவன் கொழுந்தி மகன் தேவன்
15 [திவாகர?]ன் உள்ளிட்டார் அமுது செய்விக்கும் பேர் மூன்றும் ஆண்வழி திருச்சிற்-
16 றம்பலக்காலான் அமுது செய்விக்கும் ஐஞ்சு கூறிட் டிரண்டு கூற்றால் பேர் ப-
17 ன்னிரண்டும் அமுது செய்விக்[க*][||*]

TRANSLATION.

Hail! Prosperity! In the eighteenth year and one hundred and eightieth day of (*the reign of*) the emperor of the three worlds the glorious Râjarâjadêva, when male descendants ceased to exist in some of the families of the *âṇḍâr* who had been living in the *tirumaḍai-viḷâgam* of the god and who had obtained a paddy-gift for conducting the feeding specified

in a copper-plate grant engraved formerly (*i.e.*), in the twenty-eighth year of (*the reign of*) Kulôttunga-Chôḷadêva, the abolisher of tolls, from Śivaṉ Tillainâyagaṉ of Taṉṉirkuṉṟam, who made provision for the new-moon festival and for feeding the devotees (*dêvaradiyâr*) of the god Mahâdêva who had sprung at Tirukkaḷar in Puṟangarambai-nâḍu, (*a sub-division*) of Râjêndrasôla-vaḷanâḍu and who (i.e., the *ûrâr*) had been conducting the feeding with the gifts and when Kanaka-râyar and the Mâhêśvaras wished to decide how the feeding pertaining to the families having only female descendants should be conducted, the Mâhêśvaras came to the settlement that the feeding from the interest (*of a gift*) devolved also on the female descendants. It was so agreed and that in accordance with the agreement made by the female descendants, (*it was decided that*) three persons had to be fed by Kaṉpeṟṟâṉ Maṉṟuniṟaindâṉ *alias* Aṉbaṟkaḍiyâṉ who had taken (*to wife*) the daughter of Âḍavallâṉ Pûrvaśivaṉ *alias* Pattarganâyaga-Pichchaṉ, that three persons had to be fed by Dêvaṉ Divâkaraṉ, the son of her *koḻundi* (husband's younger sister) and others and that twelve persons pertaining to two shares out of the (*whole*) five,—which (*number*) was fed by Tiruchchiṟṟambalakkâlâṉ,—shall now be fed by the male descendants (*of his*).

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Athikarichchi

No. 520.

(*A.R. No.* 221 *of* 1894).

ON THE NORTH WALL OF THE SAME SHRINE.

1 ஸ்வஸ்தி ஸ்ரீ [||*] திங்களேர்-
2 தரு தன் றொங்கல் வெண்குடை-
3 க்கீழ் நிலமகள் நிலவ மலர்மக-
4 ட் புணர்ந்து செங்கோலோச்சி-
5 க் கருங்கலி கடிந்து தன் சிந்[த]ா-
[னை]-
6 தயையு திருத்தமையனையுங் கு-
7 றிகொள் தன் இளங்கோக்க[ளை]யும்
8 நெறி[பு]ணர் தன் திரு[ப்]புதல்[வ]ர்
த[ம்*]-
9 மையு ந்தன்னெறியில் வாளவ-
10 ன் வல்லவன் மீனவன் க[ன்]ன[ன்]
11 இலங்கையர்க்கிறைவன் [பு]லம்பெ[ய]-
12 ரில் [ப]ல்லவன் கன்னகுச்சியர் கா-
[வ]லவ-
13 னெ௯ பொன்னணிச் சுடர்மணி ம-
குட-
14 ஞ் சூட்டிப் பலர்புகழ் ஆ[ங்]கவர்க்
கவர்
15 [நா]ட[ரு]ளிப் பாங்கமர் தா[னை]த்-
முன்னவரு
16 போதலர் தெரியல்வி[க்கிரம]பாண-
ன்றன்-
17 னைச் சக . . . டிப்படுத்தருள கற்-
கவ ன[வ]தரி-
18 த்த ஒருபதாரனால் திரு மணிமௌ-
லி வாழியர்
19 [மூ]வெழியசோழனைப் புனைந்து
மன்னு
20 பதுயிழுன் தென்னவர் மூவருள் மா-
ன[ப]ர[ண]-
21 ன் பொன்முடி ஆறைப் பருமணிப் பசு-
ந்தலை [பொருக]-
22 ளத்திடை வாளவிய கழல் வீரகேர-
ளனை முனை[ய]-
23 வயிற் பிடித்துத் தனதுவாரணக்
கதக்கடக்களிற்று [று]-
24 தைப்பித்தருளி அருமையில் பெரும்புக-
ழ்ச் சுந்[த]-
25 பாண்டியனை ஒற்றை வெண்கவிகையும்
சிங்காதன-
26 மு[ம்*] வெங்களத் திழந்து தன் முடி-
(ம)யிறத் தலைவி[ரி]-
27 த் தடிதளர் [ந்]தோடத் தொலைவிலி
முல்லையூ[ர்*]-
28 (த்) துரத்தி உலகினில் வேணாட்டரை-
சை [ச்] சே-
29 ணாட்டொதுக்கி மேவுபுகழ் இராம-
குடமூவர் கே[ட]-
30 [ட]முனிந்து மீட்டெழு வில்லவன்
கூடர் மடிக்-
31 கொண்டு தன்னாடு விட்டோடிக்
கா[ன]பு[க்]கொ-
32 ளிப்ப அஞ்சிய புதுமலர் மலையாரை
கெநுச[வி]ல்
33 வெலிவெழு காமுகர்ச்சாலை கலமறு-
ப்[பி]த்து
34 ஆகவ[ம]ல்லனும் அஞ்சக் கேவு-
தனருக்கரும்படையால் ஆகவ-
35 வன் சேனா[ப]தி கண்டபையனும்
கங்காதரனும் வண்டமர் களிற்-
றொ[டு]
36 மடியத் தின்டி[ற]ல் [வி]ரிகர விக்கி-
யும் வி[ஜ]யாதித்தனு[ம்*] அருமு-
ரட்சா-
37 [ங்]க[ம]ய்யனும் முதலினர் சமரபீ-
ருவொத்து வொத்துடை-
38 வ தியிர் க[டர் பொ]ன்னொடையங்கீ-
புரவியொடும் [பி]டித்து
39 த[ன்]னுடை வி-
40 ல் ஜயங்கொண்-
41 டொன்றுர் கொ[ன்]-
42 ளிப்பகாக்கை உள்ளெ-
43 ரி மடுப்பித் தொருதனித்-
44 தண்டால் பொ[ரு]கட லில-
45 ங்கையர் கோம[க]ன் விக்கிர-
46 மபாகுவின் [ம]குடமும் மு-
47 ன்றனக்குடைந்த தென்-
48 றமிழ் மண்டல முழுவது-
49 மிழந்தீ டேழ்கட லீழம் பு-
50 க்க இலங்கேசனாகி[ய] விக்-
51 கிரமபாண்டியன் பரும[ணி]-
52 மகுடமுங் கொண்டு தன-
53 னதாமிய கன்னகுச்சியிலு-
54 ம் ஆர்கலி யீழஞ் சிறிதெ-
55 ன் றெ[ண்]ணி உளங்கொ-
56 ள[ர]ன் றுடு தன் உறவொ-
57 டும் புகுந்து விளக்குமுடி கவி-
58 த்[த வீ]ரசலாமேக[ன்] போர்க்கள
[த்]-
59 தஞ்சித் தன் கார்க்களி றி(இ)ழந்து
[கல்]-
60 லைவிற் றொடிக் காதலியொடும் தன்-
61 [ற]ல்லையை பிடித்து தாயை மூக்-
62 கரிய ஆங்க[வ*]மான சிங்குதற்காக
மி[ட்]-
63 டெந்து தன் வாட்டொழி துழந்து
64 வெங்களத் துலைய வச்சங்கனத்த-
65 ரைசன் [பொ]ன்னணி முடியும்
[க]ன்-
66 னரன் வ[ழி] வந்துமைகொள வலி[ழ]-
ந்த-

67 ரைசஞறிய சிர்வல்லவன் ப[த]னர-

68 [ா]ஜன் எல்லொளித் த[ட] மணிமு-
[டி][யு*]ந் செ-

69 காண்டருளி வடபுலத் திருசாலாவ-
[து*]ம் செ-

70 [பா]ருபடை [க]டாத்திக் கண்டர்-
தினகர[ன்*] கரச-

71 னன் கணவதி வண்[ட]ர் தெரியல்
மதிசூ-

72 தனென் றெய்ப் பலவரைசரை மு-

73 [னை]னி[கவித்] தூரத்தி வ[ம்]பவர்
தருசெ[ப]ா-

74 நிற்[1] . . . . வைகருட் சளுக்கியர்
[ம]ா[னி]கை தக-

75 ர்ப்பி . . . . [க்]கமில் தனைமுன்
வைத கதாக் கனி-

76 ற்று ச . . . . தி விக்கிரமனுாண-
க் றன் பெரும்ப-

77 டை . . . . சவிமுன் பமர் துரா-
தெதாமல்வன

78 னகு . . . . னும் ஸதமாலக மெற-
கொண்டு

79 தன் . . . . வ் பெரியாற் றடை-
கரை பூண்டெ-

80 க்கட . . . . ன் காகையில் முன்-
று முறைபிலும்

81 மெ . . . . திரவிட்ட வலங்கெ[ன]ச்
கடுகெ[ல்]

82 தெலுங்க விச்சயன் தம்பியர் இருவ-
ரும் வம்பிபிலேக்

83 [செ]வுத்தாராஜனும் அக்கப்பயனும்
பித்தியகளிற்று [மீ]-

84 . க்கசோமனும் கொண்டையராஜ
னும்ருவிலே

85 முஞ்சனும் தண்டகா[ய]கன் றூர்த்
தனஞ்செயனும் மி-

86 ன[ப்பைய]னும் விரபாணிக்கனும் எ-
லேப்பனை[ட]-

87 ருமொர வெடிர் ர்மத்தர . . . .
தகராசனும் அவன்

88 றன்னையுகும் வா-

89 வை விச்சயர் மகனு

90 மாதாவு மெனு மிவ-

91 ர் முதலியர்

92 புலைகழல் அரைசர்[கொ]-

93 னா டென்னாரும் களி[ற]ா-

94 த் தன்னொளைப் பிடி[டி][2]

95 பித் தெழுவா இலக்கமும்

96 பாழ்படச் சினவில் பூண்டு-

97 [ா]புதிவை பொடிபடுத்த

98 மைமயில் சன்றெக் கழுவை-

99 த எர்செல கடத்தி வாரடிவை-

100 க விளைத்த மண்ணைக்கிப்-

101 பயில் பார்பருமானிகை பட-

102 ரெரி பரப்பி ஆக்[க]மாணகர் வெக்-

103 ணைகயி தெழுதிய உயா சயத்தம்-

104 ப கா[ட்]டியித் திபகிசை வி[ல]வர்
ம்ரி-

105 னவர் செ[ஞ்]- ——

106 புக[ச்]ச[ரு]ச[க]பர் வல்லவர் கொ-
ாவ-

107 ர் வஙகனர் கொங்கனர் சிறு-

108 பர் ஜய[ன]ர் சிங்களர் பங்களர் அத-

109 ர மு[த*]லி[ன]ர் அரசர் இடு திறை-
க்கருட் ஆ-

110 திவெ[ர]ன் றவனியுட் கூறகொள் செ-

111 பாருள்[க]ளும் உகந்து ஞுன்மறை-
[ய]வர் மு-

112 [க]ந்துகொளக்கு தெத்த விழுவெ[ர]-
க்த்து

113 வி[ள][க்]கு மனுவகநிளின் றழுமெ-

114 தஞ்செய தனைக விற்றிருவ ஜ[ய]ங்-
கெ-

115 [க]ாண்டசொழன் உசர்வபெரும் பு-

116 கட் கொவிராஜகெச[ரி]வரமா உடை-

117 டயார் ஸ்ரீராஜாயிராஜதேவர்க்கு யா-

118 [ண்டு] முப்பத்திரண்டாவது வட-
கரைராஜா-

119 ஜெஙர ரீம்கவளநாட்டு பொ[ய்]கை-

120 [நா]ட்டு திருவையாற்று துவொகமா-

121 [தெ]விசதுர[ம் உடை]யார்க்[கு] அ-
[து]த்தா-

122 பல்லவரையனும் அதிகாரிச்சி சொழ-
மன் அமித்திரலக்கியும் ஸ்ரீகாரி-
யஞ்செய்கிற கருநா(ர்)-

123 ருடையான செல்வன் மயிலேயும் வூா-
ன முடையு[3] கெத்திரவாண்டிதர்-
[க்*]சக திருவாராதனை

124 செய்யும் ஆத்திரையன் கம்பி காடம்-
[பியும்] மானமுதலி பாரதாயக்
செ[ல்]வன் னாங்க(ன்)-

125 னை ராஜமாத்தாண்ட வுரசமாரா-
யனும் வண்ணக்கு சாத்தன் வின்-
றுனவிரசொழஅனு-

126 க்கமாபெலட்டியும் பதிபிலான் சக்கன்
அரங்கமான ஜயக-

127 கொண்டசொழத் தலைக்கொலியும்
கக்கன் பூமியாக பர-

128 மாக்களிடகைத் தலைக்கொலியும் கக்கச்
சொழ-

129 [வி]ச்சாதிரியாக ஒவொ-

130 கமாதெவித் தலை[கொ]லியு-

131 ம் கக்கன் பவழக்குன்றன மது-

132 ராமகத் தலைகொ[க]ால்[யும்] உன்-

133 [னி]ட்ட பதியாரும் காணத்-

134 தான் கெசவன் மதுரா-

135 ஙகனும் பொற்பண்டாரி மணி-

136 மத்தி மாதவக்கிரமவித்தனும் ஆ-

137 க இவ்வனைவர் கண்காணியால்

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[1] A small inscribed slab containing 4 letters in each of the lines 74 to 81 is lost and its place is filled up with bricks.

[2] Read பிடிப்.

[3] Read முடைய.

27

S.I.I. Vol.VIII No.116
Daughter of Devaradiyal

(*A.R. No.* 526 *of* 1902).

ON THE SAME WALL.

1 ஸ்வஸ்தி ஸ்ரீ [*||] திரிபுவநச்சக்கரவத்திகள் ஸ்ரீகுலொத்துங்கசொழதெவற்கு யாண்டு உ-ஆ[வ*]து இ[ரா]ஜஇராஜவளநாட்டு வாணகொப்பாடிப் பெ[ண்ணை] வடகரை அண்ணாநாட்[டு உ]டையார் திருவ-

2 ண்ணாமலையுடைய நாயநார்க்கு இந்நாயநார் தெவரடியாள் . . . . மகள் தெவியான [கொ]வணவர்குல[ா]வெங் எங் தாய் வம்பு . . . [க்]குக திருக்காமக்கொ[ட்ட]- . . . . ஸ்ரீ பெலி எழுந்த-

3 ருளுவதாக நாச்சியாரையும் எழுந்தருளுவி[ச்]. . . . . யார்க்கு திருவாபரணத்து-[க்கு] இட்ட பொந் பதிக் கழஞ்சும் இந்நாச்சி[யார்]க்கு அமுதுபடிக்கு நாள் ஒந்றுக்கு நெல்லு முக்குறு-

4 ணி செல்வதாக இந்நாயநார் [1] தெவதாநம் புலியூர்நாட்டு [சுருப்பு]திமங்கலத்து நிலம் ஒருவெலிக்கு ஸ்ரீபண்டாரத்து சண்டெசுவர[வி]லையாக ஒடுக்கின பொந் பதிந்கழஞ்சு நிலம் ஒ[ரு*] வெலியா-

5 ல் வந்த நெல்லு தொண்ணூற்றுக் கலமு மமுதுபடி செலவதாகவும் தார ஐஞ்ஞூற்று பலத்தால் முந்நூலிலை[க்*] குத்திவிளக்கு ஒந்றும் திருநொந்தாவிளக்கு ஒன்றுக்கு பசு-மு-

6 ப்பத்திரண்டும் கைக்கொண்டாந் இந்நாயநார் திருவிளக்கு மன்றாடிகளில் கண்டந் மாடத்-தாநாந ஆவலகந்தரக்கொந் [|*] இவை இப்படி. சந்திராதித்தவற் செல்வதாக கல்

7 வெட்டிவிட்டெந் வம்பிந் மகள் தெவியாந கொவணவர்குலாவெங் [|*] இது பந்மா-ஹெச்வர [ர*]க்ஷை ||o உ

S.I.I. Vol.XII No.74
Hiranyagarbha and tulabhara

(*A. R. No.* 38 *of* 1930–31).

TIRUKKŌḌIKKĀVAL, KUMBAKONAM TALUK, TANJORE DISTRICT.

ON THE SOUTH WALL OF THE CENTRAL SHRINE IN THE TIRUKKŌḌĪŚVARA TEMPLE.

This record of the **22nd year**, like No. 55 above, is prefaced by the remark that 'this is also a copy of an old stone inscription'. It is preceded by a record of the Pāṇḍya king Māraṇ Śaḍaiyaṇ (*A.R.* No. 37 of 1930–31) and followed by an epigraph of the Muttaraiyar chief Iḷaṅgō-Muttaraiyar (*A.R.* No. 39 of 1930–31), all of which are engraved in continuation of one another. It has been pointed out above (No. 55) that the temple at Tirukkōḍikkāval was renovated by Sembiyaṉ-Mādēviyār, the mother of the Chōḷa king Uttama-Chōḷa and that she took care to re-engrave on the new walls the old inscriptions found in the temple.

The present record does not give the king's name, but from the mention therein of **Vīra-Mahādēviyār, the queen of Nṛipatuṅga-Mahārāja,** it may be ascribed to Nṛipatuṅga himself. It gives the interesting information that this queen performed the *hiraṇyagarbha* and *tulābhāra* ceremonies, evidently at Tirukkōḍikkā and presented 50 *kaḻañju* of gold from the wealth so weighed, to the temple of Mahādēva in the village for offerings and lamp. The assembly of Tirukkōḍikkāvu *alias* Kaṇṇamaṅgalam received the money and undertook to conduct the endowment. Queen Vīra-Mahādēviyār is known to epigraphy for the first time only from this record.

Text.

1 ஸ்வஸ்திஸ்ரீ [||*] இதுவும் ஒரு பழங்கற்படி [|*] யாண்டு [இருபத்திரண்](ட்)ா ந்ருபதுங்கமஹா
ராஜ[ர்*] தேவியார் வீரமஹாதேவியார் ஹிரண்யகர்ப்பம் துலாபார[மும்] புக்க பொன்னில் திருக்
கொடிகாவில் மஹா . . . .

2 த்த பொன் ஐம்பதின் கழஞ்சு இதனில் இருபத்தைந்து கழஞ்சு பொன்னின் பலிசையால் திசந்தி இருநாழி
அரிசியும் ஒரு பிடி நெ[ய்யு]ம் தனி அர்ச்சி[ப்*]பார் கை . . . .

3 ல் திசந்தி உழக்கு நெய் தனி அர்சிப்பார் கையிலே நொந்தாவிளக்கி[னு*]க்கு குடு[ப்*]போமானோம்
திருக்கொடிகாவான கண்ணமங்கலத்து ஸபையோம் இது பழங்கற்படி [|*] இ . . . . . .
. . . .

4 உ ஸபையோம் இல்லாமையில் அது தவிர்ந்தது இது முட்டில் பன்மாஹேஸ்வரர் கடைக்கூட்டப்பெற்றார்[1] [||*]

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(*A.R. No.* 258 *of* 1912).

PARAMĒŚVARAMAṄGALAM, MADURANTAKAM TALUK, CHINGLEPUT DISTRICT.

ON A SLAB NEAR THE GAṆĒŚA IMAGE OUTSIDE THE KAILĀSANĀTHA TEMPLE.

This inscription records that a Brahman lady **Dēvachchāṇi**, wife of Daṇḍiyaṅkiḻār Pāṇḍiya-Kramavittar set up the image of Gaṇapati-Bhaṭāra in the temple of Śailēś-varam at Paramēśvaramaṅ[ga]lam, constructed a shrine for it and endowed 40 *kāḍi* of paddy for twilight lamps and worship to the deity.

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[1] Sewell's '*Lists*' Vol. II, p. 30, No. 209.

[2] *S.I.I.* Vol. III, p. 1.

[3] This form of the king's name, as suggested in fn. 1, on the previous page, is unusual.

[4] *Nandikkalambagam*, vv. 18, 44, 46.

[5] Continuation of the inscription is lost.

(*A.R. No.* 422 *of* 1914.)

PALLIMADAM, ARUPPUKKOTTAI TALUK, RAMANATHAPURAM DISTRICT.

ON THE NORTH BASE OF THE KĀLANĀTHASVĀMIN TEMPLE.

This Vatteluttu record which is dated in the 26th regnal year of an unspecified king may be assigned to Māṟañjaḍaiyaṉ whose inscription[1] dated in the same regnal year is found in this temple. It is damaged and incomplete, but probably enumerates some of the *dēvaraḍiyār* of the temple.

Text.

1 ஸ்வஸ்திஸ்ரீ [|*] யாண்டு உசு இத்தெவர்க்கு குளவாயக்கோன் கா-

2 ளி பெற்றும் எண் மகன் அப்பி சிகைழும்[2]

(*A. R.* No 36 *of* 1931.)

TIRUKKŌḌIKĀVAL, KUMBHAKONAM TALUK, TANJAVUR DISTRICT.

ON THE SOUTH WALL OF THE CENTRAL SHRINE, TIRUKKŌṬĪŚVARA TEMPLE.

Do. This is evidently assignable to Uttama Chōḷa. It gives the interesting information that while Parāntakan-Mādēvaḍigaḷār *alias* Sembiyan Mahādēviyār the mother of Uttama-Chōḷa and daughter of Maḻavaraiyar caused to be rebuilt of stone, the original brick-structure of the central shrine of the temple of Mahādēva at Tirukkōḍikāval in Nallāṟṟūr-nāḍu, she ordered the re-engravement on its walls, of the several records of endowments originally incised on loose slabs, and that this is one such document. It is dated in the 9th opposite the 4th regnal year of the Pāṇḍya king Māṟan Saḍaiyaṉ, and records a gift of 120 [*kalañju* of gold which was entrusted to the *sabhā* of Mahēndra-Kōṭṭūr by Vara[guṇa-Mahārāja, for burning perpetual lamps with the daily supply of a *nāḻi* of ghee in the temple.

Text.

1 ஸ்வஸ்தி ஸ்ரீ [ஸ்ரீ] கோப்பரகேசரிபன்ம[ர்*]க்கு யாண்டு பதி-ஆவது வடகரை நல்லாற்றூர்நாட்டு திருக்கோடிகாவில் உடையார்க்கு ஸ்ரீ உத்தமசோழதேவரை திருவயிறுவாய்த்த மழ வரையர் மகளார்.

2 பராந்தகன் மாதேவடிகளாரான செம்பியன்மா[தே*]விய்யார் இருக்கோடிகாவில் முன் னிட்டுகல்[பிரமாணமாயு]ள்ள ஸ்ரீகோயிலை தவிர்த்து கல்லாலே ஸ்ரீவிமான மெழுந்தருளு இதெவருடைய

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த.நா.அ. தொல்லியல் துறை | தொடர் எண். 3/1981

மாவட்டம்:	தஞ்சாவூர்	ஆட்சியாண்டு:	7(அ)8
வட்டம்:	தஞ்சாவூர்	வரலாற்று ஆண்டு:	கி.பி.1171 (அ) 72
ஊர்:	கரந்தை	இந்தியக் கல்வெட்டு ஆண்டு அறிக்கை:	-
மொழி:	தமிழ்	முன் பதிப்பு:	-
எழுத்து:	தமிழ்		
அரசு:	சோழர்		
அரசன்:	இரண்டாம் இராஜாதிராஜன்	ஊர்க் கல்வெட்டு எண்.	3

இடம்: வசிஷ்டேஸ்வரர் கோயில் அர்த்தமண்டப வடக்கு ஜகதி.

குறிப்புரை: பாண்டிகுலாசனி வளநாட்டுத் தஞ்சாவூர்க் கூற்றத்துத் தஞ்சாவூர் நகரத்தார் கருந்திட்டைக்குடியான அங்கந்தவிர்த்த சோழ நல்லூரில் தங்கள் காணி நிலங்களைத் தலை, இடை எனத் தரம் பிரித்து அளந்து அனுபவிக்காமல், பின்னர், இராஜாதிராஜன் காலத்தில் முக்கோக்கிழானடிகளின் ஆணைப்படி அந்நிலங்களை ஒக்கக் கூறிட்டுக் கல்லிலும் வெட்டிக் கொண்டு அனுபவித்த செய்தியினை இக்கல்வெட்டு தெரிவிக்கிறது.

கல்வெட்டு:

1) ஸ்வஸ்திஸ்ரீ கடல்சூழ்ந்த பார்மாதரும் பூமாதரும் கலைமாதரும்
2) அடல் சூழ்ந்த பார்மாதரும் சீர்மாதரும் அமர்ந்து வாழ நாற்கடல் சூழ்
3) புவியெழும் பாற்கடல் பொற்புகழ் பரப்ப ஆதியுகமாயென் றே
4) சாதி முடி புனைந்தருளி அறுசமயமு மைம் பூத
5) மும் நெறி நின்று பாலிப்ப தெந்நவருஞ் சொலருஞ் சிங்
6) களரு முதலாய மன்னவர்கள் திறை அமந்து வந்தீண்டிச் சே
7) சவிப்ப ஊழியூழியொரு செங்கோலெழு பா
8) ரு மினிதளிப்பச் செம்பொன் வீரஸிம்ஹாஸ[சன]
9) த்து உலகுடை முக்கோக்கிழானடிகளொடும் வீற்[றிரு]
10) ந்தருளிய கோவிராஜகேஸரி பந்மரான திரிபுவ[னசக்கர]
11) வத்திகள் ஸ்ரீராஜாதிராஜ தேவற்கு யாண்டு [எ]
12) ..து பாண்டி குலாசனி வளனாட்டு தஞ்சாவூர் கூற்றத்து
13) தஞ்சாவூர் நகரத்தோம் ஐம்பது கரையிற் காணி உடைய குடிமக்கள் எல்லோமும் எங்க[ளி]ல் இசைந்து ஸம்ம
14) தித்தபடி[1] எங்கள் காணி கருந்திட்டை குடியான அங்கந் தவித்த சோழநல்லூர் முன்பிலாண்டுகள் தலை நிலக் கடை நிலம் ஒக்கக் கூறிட்டு

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தநா.அ. தொல்லியல் துறை — தொடர் எண். 8/1981

மாவட்டம்:	தஞ்சாவூர்	ஆட்சியாண்டு:	11
வட்டம்:	தஞ்சாவூர்	வரலாற்று ஆண்டு:	கி.பி.10-ஆம் நூற்றாண்டு
ஊர்:	கரந்தை	இந்தியக் கல்வெட்டு ஆண்டு அறிக்கை:	--
மொழி:	தமிழ்	முன் பதிப்பு:	–
எழுத்து:	தமிழ்		
அரசு:	சோழர்		
அரசன்:	இராஜகேசரிபன்மர்	ஊர்க் கல்வெட்டு எண்.	8

இடம்: வசிஷ்டேஸ்வரர் கோயிற் கருவறை தெற்கு ஜகதி

குறிப்புரை: சிவிகையார் சேரியைச் சேர்ந்த பெண்டாட்டி பொய்யிலி என்பாள் தன் மகன் அரையன் வீரசோழனைச் சார்த்தி நொந்தா விளக்கு ஒன்றை முன்னர் வைத்திருந்ததால் அதில் பாதி விளக்கிற்கான காசினை முள்ளூர் நசிவன் கொடுக்க, அதனைத் திருக்கோயிலுடையார்களான நந்திவேகம்பன், நந்திஅய்யாறன் ஊர்க்கிழான் சத்தி, பகைமதன் சத்ருகாலன் ஆகியோர் பெற்றுக் கொண்டு இடையனிடம் அளித்து விளக்கெரிக்கும் பணியைச் செய்திருத்தல் வேண்டும். ஆயின் யாது காரணத்தாலோ தடைப்பட்டு நிற்கவும், அவ்வாண்டு ஸ்ரீகார்யம் செய்கின்ற மிலாட்டுடையான் மனுகுல மாத்தாண்ட மூவேந்தவேளான் இதைக் கண்டுபிடித்து ஆராய்ந்து, காசு கொண்ட திருக்கோயிலுடையார்கள் செத்துப் போனமையால் அவர்கள் வழிவந்த ஊர்க்கிழான் சத்தி, பகைமதன் கூற்றி, கணபதி கூற்றி ஆகியோரை அழைத்து இப்பரிசு வைத்தார் வைத்த தர்மத்தைக் கெடுத்து உங்கள் முன்னோர் காசு கொண்டமையால் இதற்கு தண்டமாக இன்று முன்பு நிற்கும் மூவரும் இவ்விளக்கினை எரிக்க வேண்டும் என்ற முடிவு செய்ததைப் பற்றி இக்கல்வெட்டு கூறுகிறது. கல்வெட்டு இடையிடையே சிதைந்தும், இறுதியில் முடிவுறாதும் உள்ளது.

கல்வெட்டு:

1. கோப்பரகேஸரி பந்மற்கு யாண்டு ௰௧ நாலாவது தஞ்சாவூர்க் கருந்திட்டைகுடி
   மஹாதேவர்க்கு கோவிராசகே[ச]*ரி பந்மற்கு யாண்டு ௭ வது சிவிகையார்
   சேரி இருக்கும் பெண்டாட்டி பொய்யிலி
2. தந்மகந் அரையந் வீரசோழனைச் சாத்தி ஒரு திருநொந்தா விளக்கு வைக்க
   அதனில் பாதி விளக்கு[க்]*கு நெய் அட்ட கடவ இந்நாட்டு முள்ளூர்
   நசிவனிடை விளக்காலும் வந்த காசுகொண்டு இத்தளித் திருக்கோயி
   லுடையார்கள் ந
3. ந்தி வே[க]*ம்பனும் நந்தி அய்யாறனும் ஊர் கிழாந் சத்தியும் பகைமதந் சத்ரு
   காலனும் இவ்வனைவரும் .. .. கய கோக்காட்டி அரை விளக்காலும் சய.. ..
   ஆட்டாலும் தங்களில்லிசைந்த காசு கொண்டு தேவர்க்கு இடையனிட்டு
   குடுத்த முதலடையோலையுங் கு[டு]*த்து அரை

Appendix – V

Estampages – SII volume No.26

Appendix - V

Estampages - SII volume No.26





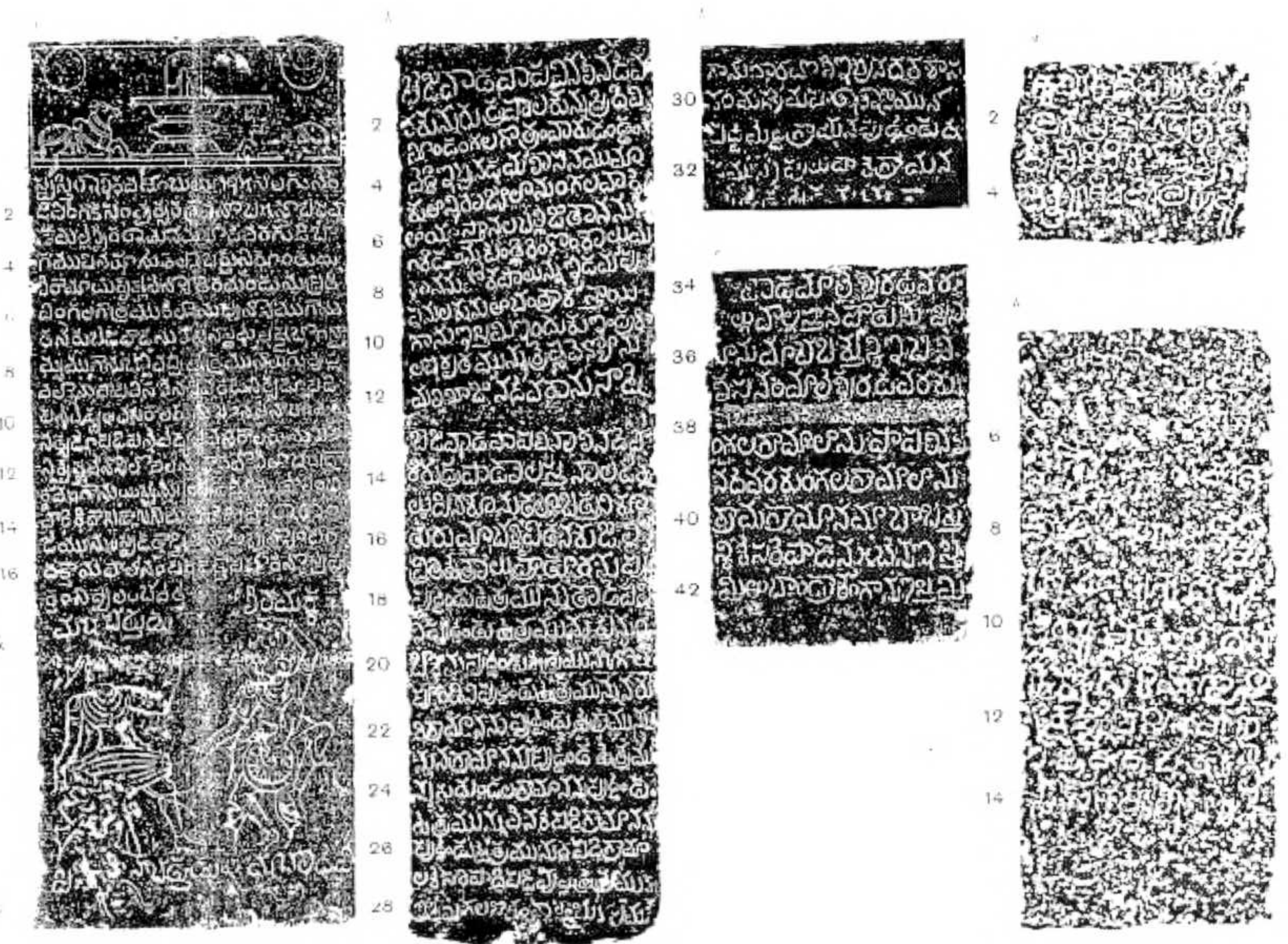




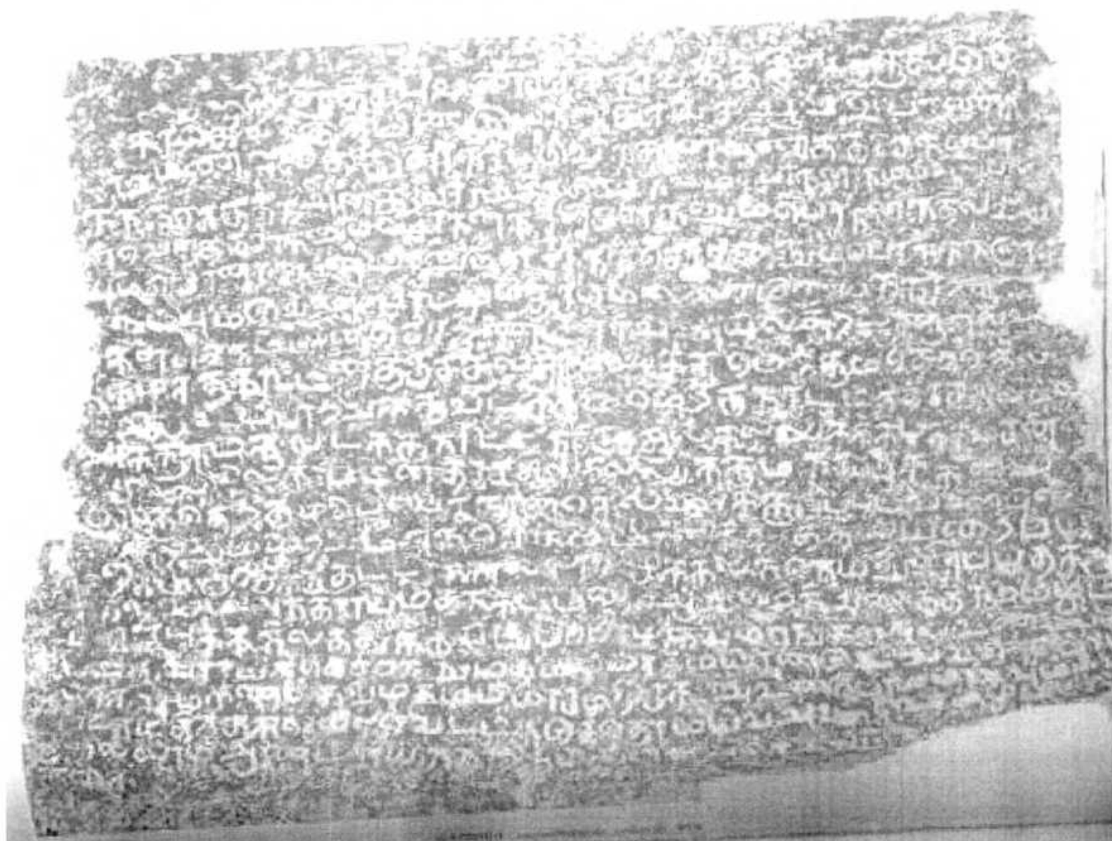


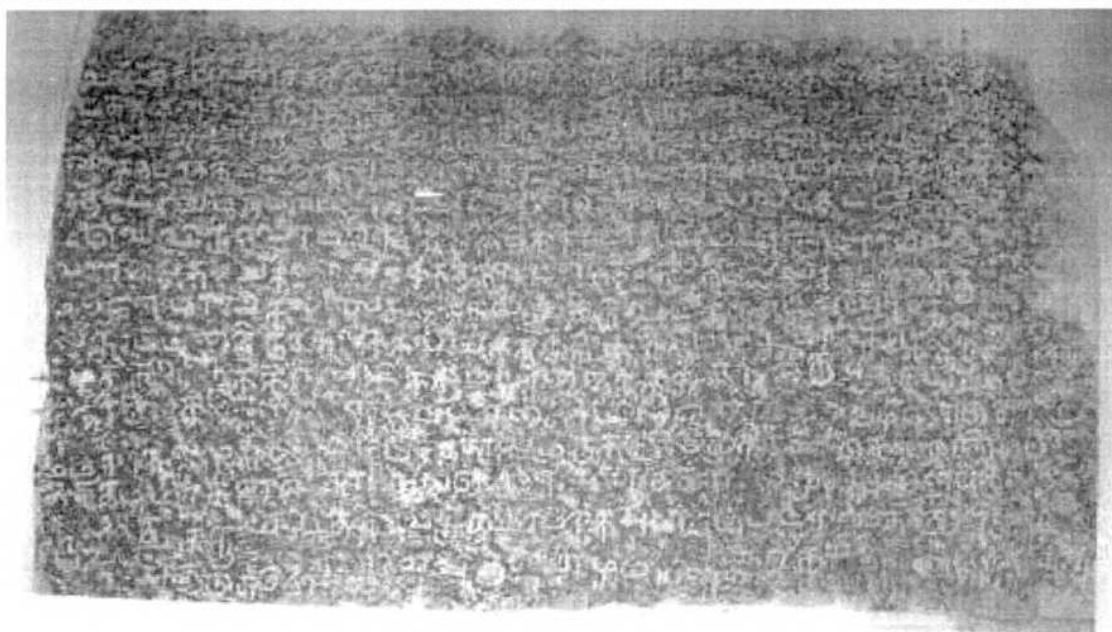






Estampages - Madurai District inscriptions Part - I





64/2003 [illegible] பக்கம் 103

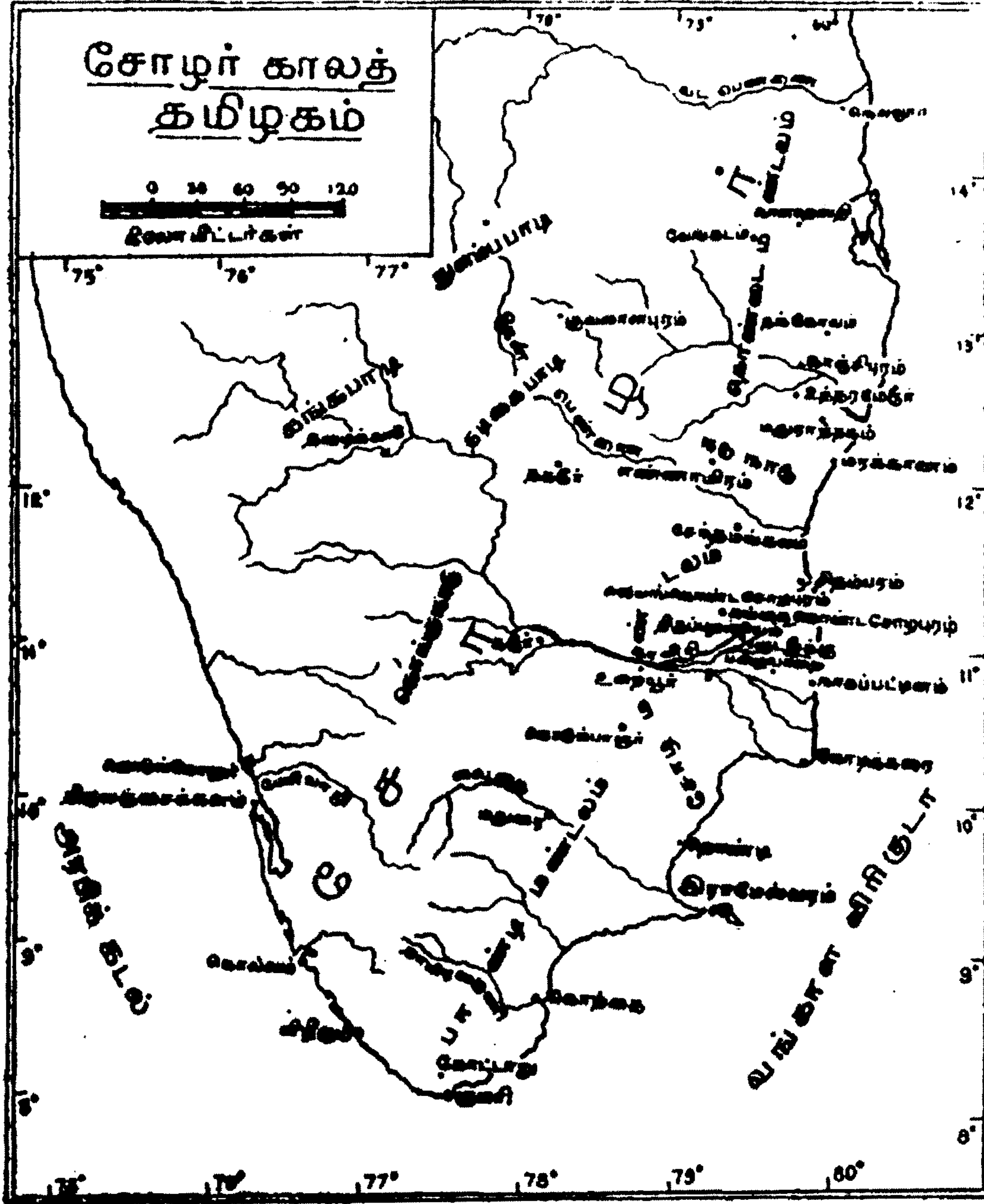


Appendix – VI

Maps

Appendix - VI

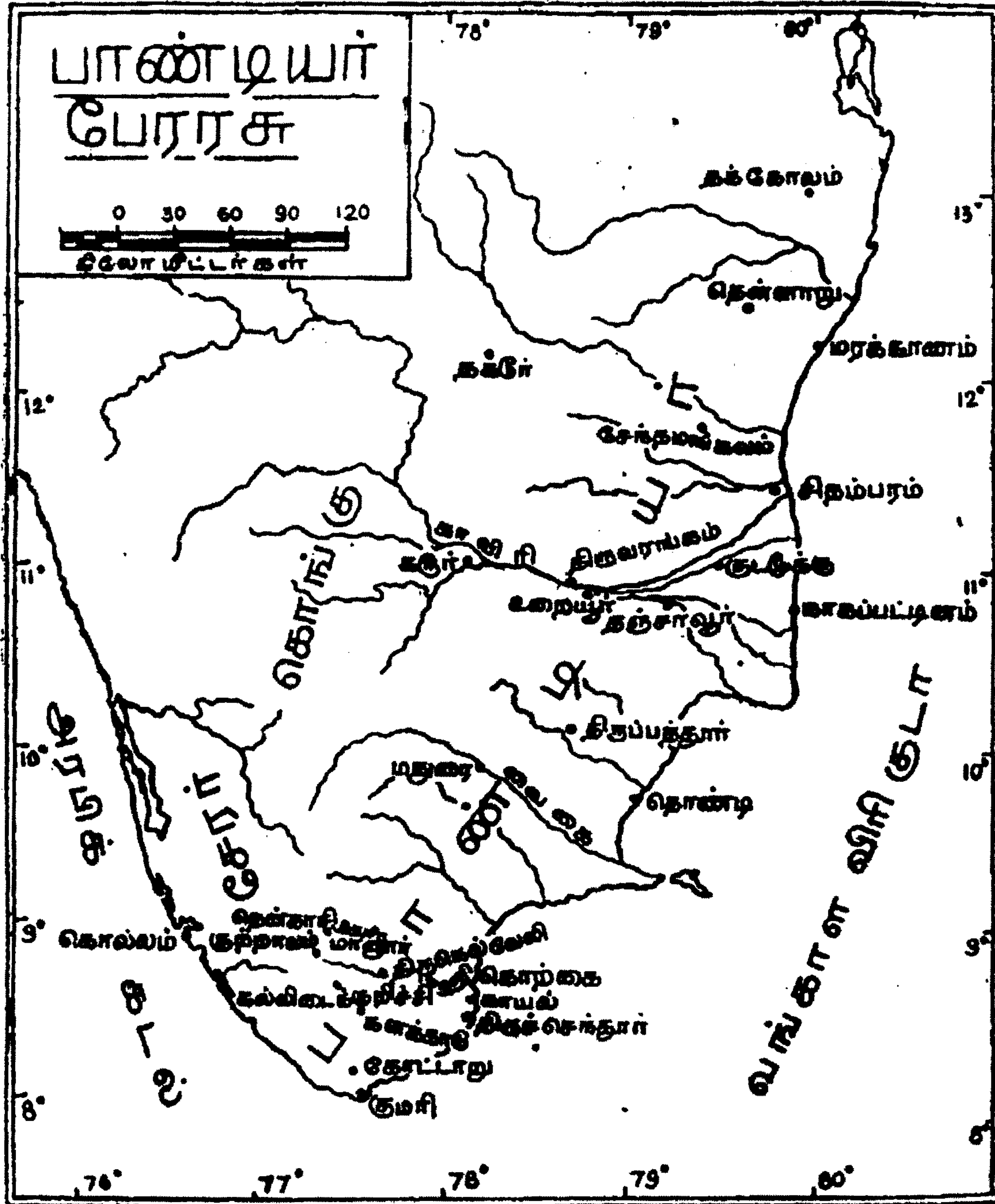
Map of Chola Empire



Map of Chola South India



Map of Pandya Empire



Appendix – VII

Photos - Devaradiyal

Appendix - VII

Devaradiars



Source :Devadasi System in Medieval Tamilnadu : Dr.K.Sadasivam (English) 2011

Devaradiars



Source : Devadasi System in Medieval Tamilnadu : Dr.K.Sadasivam (English) 2011

எடு 12



படம் - 21 : கொரங்கநாதர் கோயிலின் (தெற்கு) மாடத்திலுள்ள ஓர் ஆணின் சிலை, ஸ்ரீனிவாச நல்லூரர் (திருச்சிராப்பள்ளி மாவட்டம்).



படம் - 22 : கொரங்கநாதர் கோயிலின் (மேற்கு) மாடத்திலுள்ள பெண்ணின் சிலை.



படம் - 23 : கொரங்கநாதர் கோயிலின் (மேற்கு) மாடத்திலிருக்கும் மற்றொரு பெண்ணின் சிலை.

Source : Varalattril Devadasikal : C.S.Murugesan (Tamil) 2009

Devaradiars

ஏடு 13



படம் - 24 : ஒரு பெண்ணின் சிலை.
நாகேஸ்வரசாமி கோயில்,
கும்பகோணம் (தஞ்சை மாவட்டம்).



படம் - 25 : அதே கோயிலிலுள்ள
மற்றொரு பெண்ணின் சிலை.



படம் - 26 : ஒரு பெண்ணின் சிலை,
நாகேஸ்வரசாமி கோயில்,
கும்பகோணம் (தஞ்சை மாவட்டம்).



படம் - 27 : ஒரு பெண்ணின் சிலை,
நாகேஸ்வரசாமி கோயில்,
கும்பகோணம் (தஞ்சை மாவட்டம்).

Source : Varalattril Devadasikal : C.S.Murugesan (Tamil) 2009

Devaradiyar



Ponnanaiyal Pinching the Cheek of Lord Siva, Tiruppuvananathar Temple, Tiruppuvanam

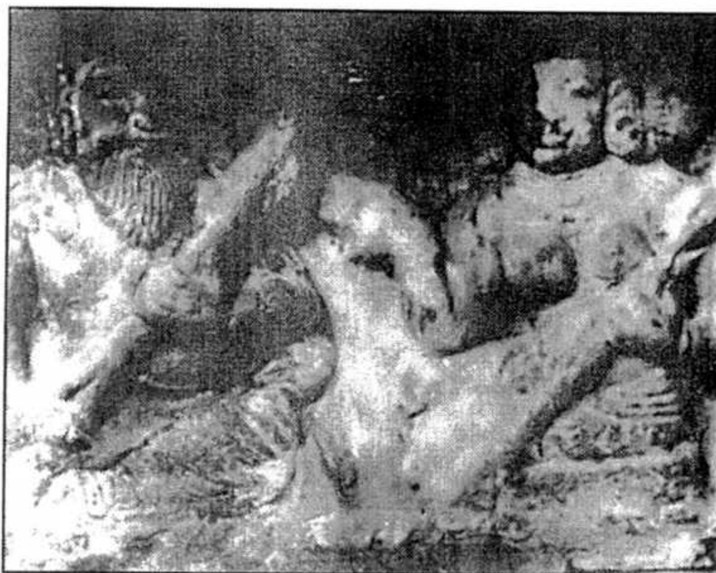


Image of Ponnanaiyal, Tiruppuvananathar Temple Tiruppuvanam

Devaradiyar



Painting, Manikka Nacchiyar and Sanniyasi, Thyagaraja Temple, Tiruvarur



Panel showing training scene in music, Amman Shrine, Nataraja Temple,Chidambaram

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School of Historical Studies
Madurai Kamaraj University
Madurai - 21.
2005

Endowments Made By Women As Revealed From the Inscriptions of Pudukkottai State

R. Vimala

Everywhere, endowments are utilized for meeting the various financial demands of the temple. Earlier these endowments, especially of land, were called Devadanas. They were permanent and Tax - Free. This capital equipment got auguments made by the pious and penitent. Petty crimes were usually compounded by simple endowments, eg. perpetual lamps in temple. These lamps were fuelled by ghee got from sheep or cows or buffaloes gifted to the temple for that specific purpose.[1]

The endowments are named in different forms. Brahmadeya the term used by kindered names Chaturvedimangalam, Agraharam, Brahmapuram, Agrahara and Brahmadesam. Tirunamattu - Kani was the land under compute ownership of the temple. Tiruvidaiyattam refers to the land granted to the Vishnu temple; Palichchandam refers to the Jain temple; Madappuram was the land endowed to the mathas.[2]

Lands or villages were endowed either to Brahmins or to Devadasis by king for a religious purpose. Sometimes, the royal and aristocratic women also had made their endowments to several temples as well as to Brahmins likewise.

The few women dancers also were given power to make their endowments. In order to maintain the temple, and to do offerings to gods and goddess.

The inscriptions from various places by many rulers of Tamilnadu give many references to the women of upper classes and devaradiyars, who endowed the temples. They had made endowments to the temple and to the other people for various causes as they had rights to dispose the property owned by them.

Perumbidugu perundevi, evidently the queen of Sattan Maran, the Muttaraiyar[3] and mother of Videlavidugu - Sattan Maran, renovated or improved the Vishnu cave temple at Tirumayam and endowed a village of Andakkudi for its maintenance.[4]

In the seventh year of Nrpatunga's reign, Paliyili Siriyanangai, daughter of Sattan Paliyili, the son of Videlavidugu Muttaraiyan,[5] along with her brother extended Paliyili - Isvaram temple and made endowments for the maintenance of perpetual lamps and for daily service in the temple.[6]

In the third years of the Rajakesari Gandaraditya, corresponding to 951 -952 A.D.[7] Tirai Amman Udaiyal, a female relative of the Udaiyal Mahimalaya. Chief of the Irukkuvel,[8] endowed a gift of thirty - one cows to Melaikovil situated at Kudumiyanmalai, in the Kulattur.[9]

During the twentieth year of Rajakesarivarman, Nangai Nava, daughter of Mutharaiyar's younger brother, younger sister of Eravakkamakal, mother of Vikkiramakesari and wife of Perumbidugu Muttaraiyar presented a gift of 2 "Kalanju[10] of gold for an ever burning lamp to Tirumulatta nattu Perumanadigal of Tirunalakkunram.[11]

The later portion of the same insciption record a gift of 2 kalanju of gold by Taliyauran.[12]

There are two records of Parakesari Uttama Chola (c.970-985). The first record is a grant by Varagunanatti, wife of 'Sembiyan Irukkuvelar, the daughter of a Muttaraiyar.[13] She presented a gift of 7 ma (tulaippon) of gold for an ever burning lamp to the Melaikovil Kudimiyamalai.[14]

The second record mentions a gift to the same temple by Nangai Nandeviyar, queen of Sembiyan Irukkuvelar.[15]

In the Parakesarivarman reign, nakkampulliya[r] presented a gift of 4 *ma[16] [kalanju] of gold [tulaippon] for a lamp to Tirumalattanattu - Perumanadigal temple for the merit of her son Kannangadar.[17]

Another record mention about Nangai Nandeviyar, queen of Sembiyan Irrukkuvelar's endowment.[18] She presented a gift of 7 kalanju and a half of *tulaippon[19] for an ever burning lamp to Tirumulattanattu - Perumanadigal temple at Tirunalakkunram.[20]

A Pandyan princes of Sevalurpattam Padari pandyadi Arasi[21] presented a gift of 15 ma of gold for feeding daily twenty Brahmins for seven days, during the Panguni - Uttiram festival in the temple of Tirunalakkunram.[22]

In the 39th year of Kulottunga III, Pirattiyalvar a devotee Kannudaya Perumal, the daughter of Nisadarajan Keralandar,[23] chief of Ponnamarapati in Piranmalai Nadu. The queen of Tirukkodungunramudaiyar, alias Nishadarayar constructed the shrine to the lord of Tirukkodunkunram.[24]

Somaladeviyar, mother of Somisvaradeva, son of Posala [Hoysola] vira-Narasingadeva of Toraisamuddiram [Dvarasamudram],[25] presented a gift of land for providing of offerings and an ever burning lamp to Tirukkokarnam - Udaiya Nayanar.[26]

There are inscriptions showing that not only royal women, but also common women had made their endowments to the temple especially for the welfare of the Brahmins. The record shows that the Sivabrahmins of the store-room of the temple of Nagarisvaramudaiya-Nayanar of Teleingakulakalapuram, alias Kulottunga Sola Pattanam in Irattapadikonda Sola-Valanadu, accepted 8 pon from two private individuals of Veliyarrur. For offerings and worship in the temple.[27]

Apart from the royal women the dancers also made endowments. During the period of Rajendra Chola I a dancing girl Marundi Andaval[28] of the Tirugattisuramudaiya Nayanar of Varappur in Kilsuda-nadu. Mentions Koyil nallur, as having been situated in Tenmipolil-nadu, a subdivision of Jayasingakula-kala-valanadu providing a gift of land for offerings in the temple.[29]

Tillaivanamudaiyal Madavalli, a dancing woman of the temple of Tirumanan-jeri-Udaiya-Nayanar of Punril-kurram a sub division of Rajaraja valanadu,[30] gifted 500 kasu for providing offerings and lamps to kshettirapalapillaiyar consecreated by her in the temple. The authorities and the watchman of the temple received the gift from Tillaivanamudaiyal.[31]

In the 22nd year of Kulottunga Chola III, Alkondi kuditangal a dancing girl paid an amount for maintaining *Sandhi[32] lamp. The amount was received in the treasury. In lieu of the money,[33] lands were purchased and granted to Sivabrahmins to carry out the wishes of the donor.[34]

In Pandya country also many dancing girls endowed money to maintain the temple. The grants were made in the form of cash, land, or in kind. During the period of Maravarman Sundarapandya I, Kaikkolars the men of a devaradiyal udaiyal oliyal to Sundara Solicharamudaiya nayanar of Kulaikulattur in urattur - Kurram, a sub division of Irattapadikonda Solavalanadu.[35] However the donors reserved to

themselves the tilling rights in the above land and agreed to pay the periodical dues to the temple, in kind, for the crops raised.[36]

In the 13th year of Maravarman Sundara - pandya a dancing girl named Alagiya nacci Pillandal, daughters of Tiruvengaligai Manikkathal of the temple of Tiruvagatti Svaramudaiya-Nayanar of Mayilappur in peruvayil-nadu, a subdivision of [Jayasingakula kala] Valanadu gave 1000 * kasu[37] as a gift to celebrate the chitrai festival and for offerings in the temple of Tirupperumananda-Nayanar of Vadokonadu in urattur - kurram, a subdivision of Irattapadikondasola valanadu.[38]

During the 11th year of Jatavarman Virapandya II, a dancing girl Nachchi, made at the instance of one Kalingarayar a grant. The grant excludes the half a *veli[39] of land belonging to Tiruvikkirama-Choliswaramudaiya Nayanar, and the half a veli of land belonging to the Narpattennayiravan - tirumadam of the temple of Tirunalakkunramudaiya - Nayanar.[40] The donor reserved to herself the tilling rights of the above land and agreed to pay varam to the temple for its maintenance.[41] Sundarapandya deva 9th year Ammai Alli Umaiyandal, a dancer of the Sundarasolisvaramudaiya nayanar made a gift of land to the same temple.[42]

Thus, the records clearly show that women had their property rights. They were empowered to buy and sell land. They could also register the temple endowments in their names. They were permitted to make temple endowments for the maintenance of the temple, offerings to be made to gods and goddesses and for the livelihood of the Brahmins. Royal women, dancers and common women made the endowments. Dancers had utilized their rights over their grants received by them.

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3. Venkatarama Ayyar, K.R., *Manual of the Pudukkottai State,* Volume II, Part I, Commissioners of Museums, Government of Tamil Nadu, 2002, p.568.
4. The Commissioner of Museums inscriptions [texts] of the Pudukkottai State arranged according to dynasties, Government Museum, Chennai, 2002.

   INS-13, IPS, p.9.

   Place: On a slab in the west *prakara* of the central shrine in the Satyagirinatha - Perumal temple at Tirumayam in the Tirumayam (T.K.).
5. Venkatarama Ayyar, K.R., *op.cit.*, p.562.
6. INS-19, IPS, p.11.

   Place: On the north face of the ruined *mandapa* in front of the rock-cut shrine on the Melamalai-hill at Narttamalai in the Kulattur (T.K.)
7. Venkatarama Ayyar, K.R., *op.cit.*, p.603.
8. INS-22, IPS, p.12.

   Place: on the south wall of the rock-cut shrine called Melai-kovil at Kudumianmalai in the Kulattur (T.K.).
9. The commissioners of museums chronological list of inscription of the Pudukkottai State, Government Museum, Chennai, 2002, p.3.
10. **Kalanju* - a gold coin current in olden days; also the equivalent weight.
11. INS-31, IPS, p.16.

    Place: On the east face of the north pillar of the rock-cut shrine called Melai-kovil at Kudumiamalai in the Kulattur [T.K.].

12. Chronological list, *op.cit.*, p.4.
13. Venkatarama Ayyar, K.R., *op.cit.*, p.589.
14. INS, 45, IPS, p.21.
Place: On the east face of the north pillar of the rock-cut shrine called Melai-kovil at Kudumiamalai in the Kulattur [T.K.].
15. Venkatarama Ayyar, K.R., *op.cit.*, p.590.
16. **ma* - a land measurement, one twentieth of a *veli*. Also, a measure of weight.
17. INS - 47, IPS, p.21.
Place:On the south face of the south Pillar of the rock-cut shrine called Melai-kovil at Kudumiamalai - Kulattur [T.K.].
18. INS-52, IPS, p.22.
Place: On the north face of the north pillar of the rock-cut shrine called Melai-kovil at Kudumiamalai in the Kulattur [T.K.]
19. *Tulaippon - the gold coin with a hole at the centre issued by the Government.
20. Chronological list, *op.cit.*, p.5.
21. Venkatarama Ayyar, K.R., *op.cit.*, p.586.
22. INS, 67, IPS, p.26.
Place:On the east wall right of entrance of the rock-cut shrine called Melai-kovil at Kudumiamalai in the Kulattur [T.K.].
23. Venkatarama Ayyar, K.R., *op.cit.*, p.614.
24. INS, 174, IPS, p.101.
Place: On the east wall of the Amman Brihadamba shrine in the Haritistesvara temple at Tiruvanangulam in the Alangudi [T.K.].
25. Chronological list, *op.cit.*, p.24.
26. INS-183, IPS, p.105.
Place:On the rock to the left of the steps leading to the spring (sunai) in the Gokarnesvara temple at Tirugokarnam in the Alangudi [T.K.].
27. INS, 503, IPS, p.365.
Place:On the rock forming the north wall of the Tirumalaikkadambar temple at Narttamalai in the Kulattur [T.K.].
28. INS-97, IPS, p.44.
Place: On the south prakara wall of the Agastisvara temple at Varappur in the Alangudi [T.K.].
29. Chronological list, *op.cit.*, p.11.
30. INS-152, IPS, p.82.
Place:On the south wall of the central shrine in the Siva temple at Tirumananjeri in the Alangudi [T.K.].
31. Chronological list, *op.cit.*, p.18.
32. *Sandhi - time of worship - morning, noon or evening.
33. INS-223, IPS, p.125.
Place: On the wall to the north of the entrance into the central shrine in the Agastisvara temple at Irumbanadu in the Tirumayam [T.K.].
34. Chronological list, *op.cit.*, p.28.
35. INS-274, IPS, p.155.
Place: On the north *prakara* wall of the siva temple at Kulattur in the Kulattur [T.K.].
36. Chronological list, *op.cit.*, p.35.
37. **Kasu* - a coin.
38. INS-286, IPS, p.168.
Place: On the wall of the right of the entrance into the first *prakara* of Madattukkovil in the Nangupatti -vattam of the Kulattur [T.K.].
39. **Veli* - a unit of land.
40. INS-366, IPS, p.238.
Place: On the south wall of the Malaiyamangai - Amman shrine in the Melai - kovil at Kudumiamalai in the Kulattur [T.K.].
41. INS-515, IPS, p.370.
Place: On the south wall of the siva temple at Kulattur in Kulattur [T.K.].
42. Chronological list, *op.cit.*, p.83.



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Certificate of Attendance

This is to certify that Prof./ Dr./Mr./ Ms. R. VIMALA, Ph.D., Research Scholar, Dept of Historical studies and Tourism Management, Research and Extension centre, Madurai-1 attended the Silver Jubilee Session of the South Indian History Congress held under the auspices of the School of Historical Studies, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai on 20, 21 & 22 January 2005.

He / She has also presented a Research Paper entitled "Endowments Made by Women as Gleaned from Iscriptions of pudukottai State"

Madurai-21
22 January 2005

Dr. D. Daniel
General Secretary, S.I.H.C.
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Madurai Kamaraj University

Prof. D. Daniel
Local Secretary

ஆய்வுக் கோவை

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பதிப்பாசிரியர்

இரா.மோகன் மு. மணிவேல்

கி. நாச்சிமுத்து தூ. சேதுபாண்டியன்

இந்தியப் பல்கலைக்கழகத் தமிழாசிரியர் மன்றம்

TAMILNADU TEMPLES AND THE DANCING GIRLS: AN INSCRIPTION POINT OF VIEW

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The study of women/s history in recent time has its own increasing significance. In Modern age historians are contemporary record keepers as well as historical interpreters of those records of realms in which women pre-dominate. The historians as men have focused on men in historical age. Heroic activities of men alone were recognized in politics, war, economic organization and public institutions where women had no role to play. But there were few pages for heroic women like Jansi Rani Laxmibai, Rani Mangammal/Velu Nachiyar, John of arc and a few others. They were exceptional women performing male roles.

More Research works have done on Tamilnadu history and also the position of women in the society in different time from various sources like inscriptions, moments, literary works, and coins. However the inscriptions are not widely used by the historians, to study the position or status of women on those days. This paper emphasizes women values in inscriptions. A number of inscriptions throw light on the position of women, especially the dancing girls, the Devaradiyars during the period from 8th century to 12th century. Devadasi system was very ancient and it was perhaps a universal phenomenon in olden days. It was practiced all over the world in one form or the other, with certain variations.

The most popular terms used in inscriptions are devaradiyar, padiyilar, Taliccherip - pendugal, and Emperumanadiyar. Inscriptions pertaining to the devadasi system generally recorded that they were offered gifts of lands, lamps, sheep, cow, gold, jewels, and other ornaments for repairing and additions done to temple.

Popular Support

The temple provided asylum to the destitute, deserted and divorced women. It also gave employment to a good segment of society. Professional dancers, singers and dramatists, were also a class of women serving in temples. They had made their absolute surrender to the deity and remained celibate throughout their lives. They were forced to this life perhaps because of desertion, deprivation and infirmity or even conviction. Some others joined temple service perhaps for securing liberation from family problems and to lead a life of devotion and piety. Lands or villages were endowed either to Brahmins or to Devadasis by king for a religious purpose. The few women dancers also were given p<?wer to make their endowments in order to maintain the temple, and to do offerings to gods and goddesses.

Rules and Regulations put forward to the Dancing Girls

From pre-historic times, the nautch-girl had been a great social attraction. Her public appearances were usually associated with religious festivals and she was generally an expert in music and dance.

Some rules and regulations were put forward to the dancers. If there were more than one dancer then the temple authorities put forward regarding the performance of dances in the temple. They used to list out the dancers who had to perform and when she had to perform the dance. In turn every dancer did their service to the temple.

The dancing girls were expected to maintain their chastity. Moreover, since they were maintai.ned by .the rules of the villagers, temple trustees, authorities or individuals, they were becomillg the sub ordinates of the donors and were controlled by them. The donor used to claim his rights over the dancer and her life.

When a donor had been to the house of a dancing girl at Tirunedugolam and found her with a Brahmin. He eventually murdered both of them. But it is very difficult to know the cause for the murder, whether the relationship between a dancing girl and a Brahmin was not allowed or the girl had gone out of the donor c.ontrol are not known from the inscription".

Presentation of Dancing Girls to the Temple

During Cola period, there was a practice of presenting dancing girls to the temples to perform dances6 Later kings and wealthy men gave gifts or lands in favour of dancing girls or dancing womell for their maintenance. During the period of Vikramacola7, a lady named Elunatunangai was gifted to the Vyaghrapurisvara temple at Tiruvengaivasal, to perform the dance called 'Santikuttu' the nine kinds of dances8. This kind of women might be called as Devaradiyars.

A dancing girl Azhahiyavaradha, daughter of Kariyal of the Tirupperuma(na)nda Nayanar of Konadu received a gift of Kuduivaram lands9 This gift was given by the trustees and the residents of Surrattakkudi for her dance performance.

Land Grants to Dancing Girls

There are many inscriptions showing land grants made to the dancers for their performance, and sometimes to maintain the temple and to do pujaas.

Dancers were granted lands for their dance performances in the temples. Santikuttu Acci Umaiyal famous for Santikuttu the daughter of Periya nattacarya13 received land from Sadiran Irasan alias Kulottanga Sola - Kidaratta raiyan and Araiyan of Peruvayi-nadu, for her Santikuttu performance during the Andra Festival, instituted by Sadiren Irasan, in the month of Vaikasi, to Sadirvitanga - Nayakar consecrated by him in the temple.

During the Jatavarman Parakramapandya period of the distribution of the ternfJle land 'Paivayal' measuring the ma was given to the dancing girls of the temple of Thirumalaikkadurnburudaiya Nayanar by the residents and the temple authorities of Telingskulakalapuram, in Konadu for doing services.

The other inscription gives information about Solacci's daughter Manikkathar. She was granted land which was confiscated by the temple authority from the thief.

Her relatives like Sandahnaththayaliyar and her sister Malaiyar was given land and house sites as gift. A dancing girl named Manikki was dedicated to the temple for the merit of a Kaikkola of the AldgiYd Sokkanathar temple at Madurai,. Dancers from Kaikolar group some Kaikkolar women were dedicated to the temples and became dancers. It became the practice for every Kaikolar's family to dedicate at least one girl to temple service. But the Kaikkolar dancers were different from Devasasis.

The other inscription records a gift of land to the daughter of Alagappar who was called as 'Ammaiyar' and two 'Thasis'. The data reveal that this is the only record from Pudukkottai State nscriptions mentioning the word 'Thasis' since this inscription belonged to a later period it may be surmised that the Thasis might have been the devaradiyar of early days.

Property Rights of the Dancers

The inscription further showing that the dancers also held the property rights. They had the selling and buying rights.'A dancing woman Santikkuttu Acci Umaiyal the daughter of Periyanattacaryan Tirunalakkunram bought 5 ma & 3 Kalanju of land for 25 Palankasu and 10 Kalam of paddy19 from the trustees of the temple Tiruvikkirama Cholisvaramudiya Nayanars, the residents of Menmananallur in Kunrusal Nadu. The amount was paid in the forms of cash.

During Srivirapandia l)eva period, the authorities of the temple of TirunalakkunramudaiyiJ Nayanar of Kunrusal Nadu in Konadu, and by the residents of the same sold a land to the dancing girl Nacci above for 73,300 current genuine and new coins an radunar Pudukkasu as they were in need of funds for repairing the temple. The signatories were the representatives of the residents of the surrounding villages. The dues from the land were ordered to be paid directly to the temple of Tirunalakkunramudaiya nayanar Nacci, the daughter of Turgaiyandal, bought a land and paid the whole amountn She received the receipt from the residents of Konadu and the temple authorities.

During the period of Sundra Pandia Deva a land was sold by the temple authorities and the residents of Mayilappur in Peruvayi nadu, for 100 current panam. The vendors fixed the dues also which the purchaser had to pay for the above land. Azahiyavaradham, daughter of Kariyar, a dancing girl of the temple of Tiruperuma (na)ndas of Vadakonada23 bought the land and paid the due amount.

During the period of Sundara Pandya Deva a dancing girl called Periyanacci Thurkkai)·l of Tirunalakkunram bought land from the trustees of the temple of Tiruvikki (Ia)ma Cholisvaramudaiya Nayanar and the resident of me (ma) nanallur in Kunrusal nadu for 3200 Pudukkasu.

During the period of Kulasekara Pandiya to the Tiruvambalam Piriyadar alagiya Pefldir the dancing girls of Tirunalakkunram bought land which was sold in public auction subjected to the payment of dues to the temple, by certain persons of Sikharanallur for 3,000 Kasu. It is recorded that the above land belonged to two private individuals of that village who absconded without paying the taxes due for them Certain dancing girls of the temple of Tirumalaikadamburadaiya Nayanar purchased eight ma of lands. During the Sundara Pandya period for this land the temple trustees and residents of Telingakulaka Puram Kulattunga Sola Pattanam in Konadu fixed the dues to be paid to the temple.

இந்தியப் பல்கலைக்கழகத் தமிழாசிரியர் மன்றம்

தமிழியற்புலம்

மதுரை காமராசர் பல்கலைக்கழகம்

[ஆற்றல்சால் பல்கலைக்கழகம்]

சான்றிதழ்

இந்தியப் பல்கலைக்கழகத் தமிழாசிரியர் மன்றத்தின் சார்பில் 2012 மேத் திங்கள் 19, 20 ஆகிய இரண்டு நாட்கள் பெங்களூரு தமிழ்ச் சங்கத்தில் நடைபெற்ற மன்றத்தின் 43 - ஆம் கருத்தரங்கில் R. Vimala அவர்கள் கலந்துகொண்டு Tamilnadu temples and the dancing girls: an inscription point of view என்னும் தலைப்பில் ஆய்வுக் கட்டுரை வழங்கினார் எனச் சான்றளிக்கப்படுகிறது.

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